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THE

BRITISH ESSAYISTS.

WITH

PREFACES,

BIOGRAPHICAL, HISTORICAL, AND CRITICAL.

BY

JAMES FERGUSON, ESQ.

AUTHOR OF THE "NEW BIOGRAPHICAL DICTIONARY."

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CONTENTS

OF

VOLUME II.

No.		
67.	ON TASTE	<i>Tilson</i>
68.	Continuation of the history of the Pumpkin family from No. 47.	<i>Earl of Corke</i>
69.	Letters on high heels—Qualification to play at cards—On vails	<i>Moore</i>
70.	Books the physic of the mind; News, its food; Novels, its poison	<i>Cambridge</i>
✓ 71.	The author's good humour—Frag- ments of correspondence—Ladies' dress	_____
✓ 72.	Ambition for trifles—Superfluities turned into necessities	_____
73.	On the different behaviour of men at death	<i>Moore</i>
74.	On the manner of passing the night in the vulgar and fashionable world	<i>Parratt</i>
75.	Comparison of the present times with the past	<i>Moore</i>
76.	Character of an improver	<i>Cambridge</i>
✓ 77.	Forms of rejecting lovers by a haughty widow, <i>Moore</i> —Song on Molly	<i>Unknown</i>
✓ 78.	On female dress and painting	<i>Cole</i>
✓ 79.	On the mischiefs of romances—Story of Clarinda and Antonio	<i>Berenger</i>

No.

129. Solomon's virtuous woman, the fine lady of modern times—Hospital for the relief of decayed members of Parliament—On giving false characters of servants *Unknown*
130. Letter from a lady, complaining of neglect *Unknown*.—Nankeen breeches *Moore*
131. On the happiness of the world, if every man filled the state he was fit for . *Mulso*
132. Defence of the ways of Providence . *Loveybond*
133. On affectation of consequence—Epitaph on Sir Thomas Scott . . . *Moore*
134. On the impediments to conversation . *Loveybond*
135. Abuse of words—Characters of Sombrinus and Hilarius *Unknown*
136. On the love of noise

137. Inutility of ancient learning—English writers sufficient in all sciences .

138. The author's intention to deal in politics and scandal *Moore*
139. A tale of scandal

140. Meditation among the books . *Sir D. Dalrymple*

THE
W O R L D.

No. 67. THURSDAY, APRIL 11, 1754.

TO MR. FITZ-ADAM.

SIR,

ALL the fashionable part of mankind set out with the ambition of being thought men of *taste*.

This is the present universal passion; but the misfortune is, that, like sportsmen, who lose their hare and start conies, which lead them over warrens, where their horses break their legs, and fling their riders; so in the affair of taste, we frequently see men following some false scent, with the same ardour that they would have pursued the proper object of a chase, and with much greater inconveniences.

Of all the various subjects that have yet exercised the geniuses of modern writers, that of taste has appeared to be the most difficult to treat; because almost all of them have lost themselves in endeavouring to trace its source. They have generally indeed referred us for its origin to the polite and imitative arts; whereas those are rather its offspring than its parents. Perhaps their mistakes in treating this delicate subject may have arisen from the great resemblance which false taste bears to true,

which hasty and inaccurate observers will find as difficult to distinguish, as to discern Pinchbeck's metal from genuine gold at the first transient glance. To the end, therefore, that the ideas of our fine gentlemen may be somewhat more precisely adjusted upon this important article, I shall venture to assert, that the first thing necessary for those who wish to acquire a true taste is, to prepare their minds by an early pursuit and love of moral order, propriety, and all the rational beauties of a just and well regulated conduct.

True taste, like good breeding in behaviour, seems to be the easiest thing in nature to attain; but yet, where it does not grow spontaneously, it is a plant, of all others the most difficult to cultivate. It must be sown upon a bed of virgin-sense, and kept perfectly clean of every weed that may prevent or retard its growth. It was long erroneously thought to be an exotic; but experience has convinced us that it will bear the cold of our most northern provinces. I could produce instances to confirm this assertion, from almost every county of Great Britain and Ireland.

The folly is, that every man thinks himself capable of arriving at perfection in this divine accomplishment: but nature hath not dispensed her gifts in such profusion. There is but one sun to illuminate our earth, while the stars that twinkle with inferior lustre are innumerable. Thus those great geniuses that are the perfect models of true taste are extremely rare, while thousands daily expose themselves to ruin and ridicule by vain and awkward imitations.

Perhaps to arrive at taste in one single branch of polite refinement might not be altogether so fruitless an ambition; but the absurdity is, to aim at an universal taste. Now this will best appear by observing that numbers miscarry even in the most confined

pursuit of this difficult accomplishment. One seeks this coy mistress in books and study; others pursue her through France, through Italy, nay, through Spain; and after all their labours, we have frequently seen them ridiculously embracing pedantry and foppery with the raptures due alone to taste. Thus it happens with many deluded travellers in the fields of gallantry, who enjoy fancied familiarities with women of the first rank, whose names and titles strumpets have assumed, to deceive the vain, the ignorant, and the unwary.

It is thought the *Bona Dea* of the Romans was nothing more than the goddess of taste. Ladies alone were admitted to her mysteries. The natural indelicacy, indeed, of the stronger sex seems to countenance this opinion; women in general having finer and more exquisite sensations than men; and it is a thorough acquaintance with the virtues and charms of that most amiable part of our species which constitutes the most essential quality of a man of taste. Who indeed ever knew a mere soldier, a mere politician, a mere scholar, to be a man of taste?

Were we to erect a temple to taste, every science should furnish a pillar, every virtue should there have an altar, and the three Graces should hold the high-priesthood in commission.

We daily see pretenders to this quality endeavouring to display it in a parade of dress and equipage; but these, alas! can only produce a beau. We see others set up for it amongst cards and dice; but these can create nothing better than a gamester. Others in brothels, which only form a debauchee. Some have run for it at Newmarket; some have drank for it at the King's-arms; the former, to their great surprise, have acquired only the title of good jockeys, the latter of jolly bucks. There are many

who aim at it in literary compositions, and gain at most the character of intruding authors.

However, this general pursuit of taste has its uses; those numbers who go in quest of it, where it is never to be found, serve at least as so many marks that teach us to avoid steering the same unsuccessful course.

The plain truth of the matter is, a house filled with fine pictures, the sideboard loaded with massy plate, the splendid equipage, with all the hey-dukes, pages, and servants that attend it, do not entitle the possessor to be called a man of taste: they only bring with them either anxiety or contempt to those whose rank and fortunes are not equal to such ostentation. I will be bold to say, therefore, notwithstanding some of your readers will doubtless look upon me as an unpolished Vandal, that the best instance any man can give of his taste, is to show that he has too much delicacy to relish any thing so low and little as the purchase of superfluities at another's cost, or with his own ruin. At least the placid satisfaction of that man's heart who prudently measures his expenses, and confines his desires within the circle of his annual revenue, begets that well-ordered disposition of mind, without which it is impossible to merit the character of a man of just refined taste.

Certain it is, that he best discovers the justness of his taste who best knows how to pursue and secure the most solid and lasting happiness. Now where shall we look for this, with so much probability of finding it, as in temperance and tranquillity of mind, in social and domestic enjoyments? Are not these the first and most essential objects of taste? Certainly they are; and when a man has once acquired these, he may, if fortune and nature have properly qualified him, launch out into a more ex-

tensivo compass, and display his genius in a larger circle.

But it will be difficult, I fear, to persuade those young men of the present generation, who are ambitious for establishing a character for taste, to advance towards it by so slow and regular a progression. They seem, in general, to be possessed with a kind of epic madness, and are for hurrying at once into the midst of things. But perhaps you, Mr. Fitz-Adam, may be able, by reason or by ridicule, to call back their attention to the previous steps; to persuade them to learn to walk, before they attempt to run; to convince them, that profusion in architecture, in gardening, in equipage, in dress, &c. can serve no other purpose but to disturb their imaginations, and to give them a general distaste of themselves, and of every thing around them.

It is by no means, however, surprising that this character of taste should be so universally sought after; as true taste is doubtless the highest point of perfection, at which human nature, in this her state of frailty, can possibly arrive. A man endowed with this quality possesses all his senses, in the manner best adapted to receive the impression of every true pleasure, which Providence has scattered with a liberal hand for the delight of its creatures. There is nothing intrinsically beautiful which does not furnish him with perpetual delight; as every thing ill-fashioned and deformed affects him with disgust and abhorrence. That is, in a word, the avenues of his mind are open only to those enjoyments that bring with them the passports of truth and reason.

Philalethes is a man of taste, according to the notion I have here given of that quality. His conduct is influenced by sentiment as well as by principle; and if he were ever so secure of secrecy and im-

punity, he would no more be capable of committing a low or a base action, than of admitting a vile performance into his noble collection of painting and sculpture. His just taste of the fine arts, and his exquisite delicacy in moral conduct, are but one and the same sense, exerting itself upon different objects; a love of beauty, order, and propriety, extended to all their various intellectual and visible exhibitions. Accordingly Philaethes is consistent in every part of his character. You see the same elegant and noble simplicity, the same correct and judicious way of thinking, expressed in his dress, his equipage, his furniture, his gardens, and his actions.

How different is Micio from Philaethes! Yet Micio would be thought a man of taste. But the misfortune is, he has not a heart for it. I say a heart, however odd the expression may sound: for as a celebrated ancient has defined an orator to be *vir bonus dicendi peritus*, so I must insist upon it, that a good heart is an essential ingredient to form a good taste. When I see Micio, therefore, dissipating his health and strength in lewd embraces and midnight revels; when I see him throwing away over night at the gaming table, what he must refuse the next morning to the just elamours of his injured tradesmen; I am not the least surprised at his trimmed trees, his unnatural terraces, his French *treillage*, his Dutch parterres, his Chinese bells, and his tawdry equipage.

In fine, though every man cannot arrive at the perfection of this quality, yet it may be necessary that he should be sufficiently instructed, not to be deceived in his judgment concerning the claim of it in others. To this end the few following queries may be applied with singular advantage. Is the pretender to taste proud? Is he a coxcomb? Is he

a spendthrift? Is he a gamester? Is he a slanderer? Is he a drunkard? Is he a bad neighbour? a sham patriot? or a false friend? By this short catechism every youth, even of the most slender capacity, may be capable of determining who is *not* a man of taste.

I am, &c.

J. T.

No. 68. THURSDAY, APRIL. 18, 1754.

TO MR. FITZ-ADAM.

SIR,

THE kind reception which you gave to my letter of November last makes me take the liberty of sending you some farther anecdotes of my family.

As my grandfather, Sir Josiah Pumpkin, had made a considerable figure in King Charles's court, his only son, Ralph, my honoured father, was no less conspicuous for his valour, towards the latter end of King William's reign. Although the race of kings was changed, the laws of honour still remained the same. But my grandfather had retired with his family to Pumpkin-hall, about a year and a half before the Revolution, much discontented with the times, and often wishing that Judge Somebody (I forget his name) had been a militia colonel, that he might have run him through the body, or cut off one of his cheeks with a broad-sword. In the same strain he frequently wished Father Peters a life-guard-man, that he might have caned him before the court-gate of Whitehall. 'These fellows,' said he, 'put me in

mind of murderers in popish countries, who, if they run into a church after cutting a throat, are secured from all danger of punishment. Our English ruffians too are frequently safe, if they can but show a lawyer's gown, or a priest's cowl. My grandmother, Lady Pumpkin, was a prudent woman, and, not without some difficulty, persuaded Sir Josiah to content himself with drinking constant bumpers of prosperity to the church and state, without fighting duels or breaking heads in defence of the British constitution. Indeed he might well be content with the glory he had obtained, having been once shot through the leg, and carrying the marks of seven-and-twenty wounds in different parts of his body, all boldly acquired by single combats, in defence of nominal liberty, and real loyalty, during King Charles the Second's reign.

My father was returned for a borough in Wales, in the second parliament of King William. This drew him every winter to London; and he never took his leave of Sir Josiah without receiving a strict command to do some brave act, becoming a man of honour and a Pumpkin. As he was remarkably an obedient son, and indeed as we were all, not only as Pumpkins, but as old Britons, very choleric and fiery, my father scarce ever returned home without some glorious achievement, the heroism of which generally reached Pumpkin-hall before the hero. Of his several exploits, give me leave only to mention three; not so much in regard to his honour, as that they carry in them some particular and remarkable circumstances.

There was an intimacy between my father and Major John Davis of the foot-guards. Their first acquaintance and friendship had begun when the major was quartered at a market-town near Pumpkin-hall. Their regards had continued towards each other with

the greatest strictness for several years; when one day at dinner with a large company at a tavern, my father jocularly in discourse said, 'Ah! Major! Major! you still love to ride the fore-horse:' alluding to his desire of being foremost in all parties of pleasure. Major Davis immediately changed colour, and took the earliest opportunity of calling Mr. Pumpkin aside, and demanding satisfaction. My father asked for what? The major made no reply but by drawing his sword. They fought, and the major was soon disarmed. 'Now, Jack,' says my father, 'pray tell me what we fought for.' 'Ah, Ralph,' replied the major, 'why did you reproach me with having been a postilion? It is true I was one; but by what means did you know it, and when you did know it, why would you hint it to the company, by saying that I still loved to ride the fore-horse?' My father protested his ignorance of the fact, and consequently his innocence of intending any affront. The two friends were immediately reunited as strongly as before; and the major ever afterwards was particularly cautious how he discovered his original, or blindly followed the folly of his own suspicions.

One of my father's tavern companions, Captain Shaddow, who was very young, very giddy, and almost as weak in body as in mind, challenged him on a supposed affront, in not receiving the return of a bow which he had made to my father in the play-house. They were to fight in Hyde Park; but as the captain was drawing his sword with the fiercest indignation, it luckily occurred to his thoughts that the provocation might possibly have been undesigned, or if otherwise, that the revenge he had meditated was of too cruel and bloody a nature; he therefore begged pardon of his adversary, and made up the affair.

I wish this had been the last of my father's com-

bats ; but he was unhappily engaged in a duel with a French officer, who had taken the wall of him ; and in that duel he received a wound, which, after throwing him several months into a languishing, miserable condition, at last proved fatal by ending in a mortification. He bore his long illness with amazing fortitude ; but often expressed an abhorrence of these polite and honourable murders ; and wished that he might have lived some years longer, only to have shown that he durst not fight.

I leave you, Mr. Fitz-Adam, to make your moral reflections on these several stories ; but I cannot conclude my letter without giving you an account of the only duel in which my poor dear husband, Mr. Solomon Muzzy, was engaged ; if a man may be said to be engaged who was scarce ever awake.

Mr. Muzzy was very fat, and extremely lethargic. To be sure, he had courage sufficient for a major-general ; but he was not only unwieldy, but so lethargically stupid, that he fell asleep even in musical assemblies, and snored in the play-house, as bad, poor man ! as he used to snore in his bed. However, having received many taunts and reproaches from my grandfather (who was become by age very tart and peevish), he resolved to challenge his own cousin-german by the mother's side, Brigadier Truncheon, of Soho-square. It seems the person challenged fixes upon the place and weapons. Truncheon, a deep-sighted man, chose Primrose-hill for the field of battle, and swords for the weapons of defence. To avoid suspicion, and to prevent discovery, they were to walk together from Piccadilly, where we then lived, to the summit of Primrose-hill. Truncheon's scheme took effect. Mr. Muzzy was much fatigued and out of breath with the walk. However, he drew his sword ; and, as he assured me himself, began to attack his cousin Truncheon with a valour which must have

charmed my grandfather, had he been present. The brigadier went back ; Mr. Muzzy pursued ; but not having his adversary's alacrity, he stopped a little to take breath. He stopped, alas ! too long : his lethargy came on with more than ordinary violence : he first dozed, as he stood upon his legs, and then beginning to nod forwards, dropped by degrees upon his face in a most profound sleep. Truncheon, base man ! took this opportunity to wound my husband as he lay snoring on the ground ; and he had the cunning to direct his stab in such a manner as to make it supposed that Mr. Muzzy had fled, and in his flight had received a wound in the most ignominious part of his body. You will ask what became of the seconds ? They were both killed upon the spot ; but being only two servants, the one a butler, the other a cook, they were buried the same night ; and by the power of a little money properly applied, no farther inquiry was ever made about them.

Mr. Muzzy, wounded as he was (the blood trickling from him in great abundance), might probably have slept upon that spot for many hours, had he not been awakened by the cruel bites of a mastiff. The dog began first to lick his blood, and then tearing his clothes, fell upon the wounded part as if it had been carrion. My poor husband was thoroughly awakened by the new hurt he had received ; and indeed it was impossible to have slept, while he was losing whole collops of the fattest and most pulpy part of his flesh ! so that he was brought home to me much more wounded, Mr. Fitz-Adam, by the teeth of the mastiff, than by the sword of his cousin Truncheon.

This, sir, is the real fact, as it happened ; although I well know that the Truncheon family take the liberty of telling a very different story, much to the dishonour of my husband's memory. Permit me,

Mr. Fitz-Adam, by your means, to do public justice to Mr. Muzzy's character, and at the same time to assure you that I am,

Sir,

Your most obliged and obedient
humble servant,

MARY MUZZY.

No. 69. THURSDAY, APRIL 25, 1754.

For the entertainment of those of my readers who love variety, and to oblige those of my correspondents whose epistles to me are too short to be published singly, I have set apart this paper for miscellaneous productions.

TO MR. FITZ-ADAM.

SIR,

If you are a strong-bodied man, be so kind as to open your arms to your fair readers, and lift them down safely from their high-heeled shoes. I am really in pain when I see a pretty woman tottering along, uncertain at every step she takes whether she shall stand or fall. If the ladies intend by this fashion to display the leg to greater advantage, to be sure we are obliged to them; but I cannot help being of opinion, that the shortness of the modern petticoat might fully answer this desirable purpose.

Pray, Mr. Fitz-Adam, favour us with your thoughts upon this matter; and if you can reduce this enormity, and take the ladies down (I will not say in

their wedding only, but) in all their shoes, you will oblige every husband and father, whose wives and daughters may be liable, from walking in stilts, to make false steps.

I am, &c.

T. H.

SIR,

As almost every session convinces us that it is not beneath the wisdom of parliament to spend much time and consideration in the enacting and amending laws for the preservation of the game, and to determine who should and who should not be his own butcher or poulterer in the fields; it is much to be wondered at, that the same vigilant care has not extended to the employment of leisure and opulence in town; and to determine what estate or place should qualify a man to play at cards or dice: how much he must be possessed of to sit down to a game of all-fours: how much more to cut in at whist, or to make one at a party of brag: or how much more still to punt at faro, or to sit down at a hazard-table: always reserving to privy-counsellors, and members of either house, an exclusive privilege of ruining themselves at any game they shall think proper to play at.

I dare say, Mr. Fitz-Adam, a bare hint of this will be sufficient to get it carried into a law; especially if it be added, that till such a law is made, my lord and the chairman are upon a level in their amusements; except that his lordship is losing his estate with great temper and good-breeding at White's, and the chairman beggaring his family with oaths and curses in a night-cellar.

I am, sir,

Your humble servant,

W. X.

SIR,

Your paper upon servants put me in mind of a passage in the life of the Marquis (afterwards Duke) of Ormond, which I believe will not be unentertaining to your readers.

The marquis having been invited by a French nobleman to pass some days at his house in St. Germain en Laye, in compliance with an inconvenient English custom, at his coming away, left with the *maître d'hôtel* ten pistoles, to be distributed amongst the servants. It was all the money he had, nor did he know how to get credit for more when he reached Paris. As he was on the road ruminating on this melancholy circumstance, and contriving how to raise a small supply for present use, he was surprised at being told by his servant, that the nobleman at whose house he had been entertained was behind, driving furiously, as if he was desirous of overtaking him.

The marquis, it seems, had scarce left St. Germain, when the distribution of the money he had given caused a great disturbance amongst the servants; who, exalting their own service and attendance, complained of the *maître d'hôtel's* partiality. The nobleman, hearing an unusual noise in his family, and, upon inquiry into the matter, finding what it was, took the ten pistoles, and, causing horses to be put to his chariot, made all the haste that was possible after the Marquis of Ormond. The marquis, upon notice of his approach, got off his horse as the other quitted his chariot, and advanced to embrace him with great affection and respect; but was strangely surprised to find a coldness in the nobleman which forbid all embraces till he had received satisfaction in a point which had given him great offence. He asked the marquis if he had reason to

complain of any disrespect or defect which he met with in the too mean, but very friendly entertainment, which his house afforded: and being answered by the marquis, that his treatment had been full of civility; that he had never passed so many days more agreeably in his life, and could not but wonder that the other should suspect the contrary: the nobleman then told him, ‘ That the leaving ten pistoles to be distributed amongst the servants was treating his house as an inn, and was the greatest affront that could be offered to a man of quality: that he paid his own servants well, and hired them to wait on his friends as well as himself: that he considered him as a stranger who might be unacquainted with the customs of France, and err through some practice deemed less dishonourable in his own country; otherwise his resentment should have prevented any expostulation: but as the case stood, after having explained the nature of the affair, he must either redress the mistake by receiving back the ten pistoles, or give him the usual satisfaction of men of honour for an avowed affront.’ The marquis acknowledged his error, took back his money, and returned to Paris with less anxiety about his subsistence.

Your readers, Mr. Fitz-Adam, may learn from this story, that all our fashions are not borrowed from France.

Yours, &c.

A. Z.

HONOURED SIR,

This is to acquaint you that I am a gentleman’s servant, and that I have read the letter upon servants, signed O. S. in the World of the 21st of February last: and though I admit the charge brought against us in that letter to be true, namely, that those who have nothing to give may go whistle for a

clean plate or a glass of wine; yet I do not agree that a poor poet (for I am sure he must be a poet that wrote that letter; if he had been a gentleman, he would have done as gentlemen do); I say, that I do not agree that a poor poet has any right to abuse those that are his betters. A good servant, and one who knows his business, will endeavour all he can to keep low people from intruding at his master's table: and yet so far are many of us from holding poets in contempt, that they are always welcome to dinner in the hall with the best of us, and have free leave to read their verses or sing their songs for the entertainment of the company.

If this same Mr. O. S. had been a philosopher or a man of deep learning, he might have had some sort of reason to find fault; for it is not to be denied that we are a little apt to overlook such sort of gentry; but not so much because they have nothing to give, as from an absence of mind which we constantly observe in these philosophers and men of deep learning, who, if they ask for bread, beer, or wine, are as well contented with oil, vinegar, or mustard, or any thing else that happens to be readiest at hand.

I beg pardon for troubling you with this letter, which is only to set these matters in a clear light, and to request that you will publish no more papers about servants, but let things go on in their old way; and in so doing you will oblige us all in general, and in particular,

Honoured sir,
Your dutiful servant to command,
I. K.

As I am desirous of being a peace-maker upon all occasions, I shall comply with the request of this correspondent, and conclude my paper with a hint to all gentlemen in livery, that as poets, philosophers, and

men of learning, will be sometimes intruders at their masters' tables, let them consider them as brethren, and treat them with humanity.

No. 70. THURSDAY, MAY 2, 1754.

Ψυχῆς Ιατρειον.

TO MR. FITZ-ADAM.

SIR,

YOUR correspondent in your sixty-third paper has, I must confess, shown no less ingenuity than the Duke de Vivonne did wit in his celebrated answer to Louis the Fourteenth, upon that king's asking him at table, *Mais à quoi sert de lire? La lecture*, said the duke, *fait à l'esprit ce que vos perdrix font à mes joües*. But whatever new doctrines these gentlemen are pleased to broach, that books are the food of the mind, I must beg leave to say, that they have from time immemorial been called *physic*, not *food*: and for this I appeal to the famous inscription on the Alexandrian library, which I have placed at the head of my letter, *Physic for the soul*.

For my own part, I can truly say, that I have considered all books as *physic* from my earliest youth; and so indeed have most of my school-fellows and acquaintance, and nauseated them accordingly: nor can any of us at this time endure the sight or touch of them, not even a present from the author, unless it be as thoroughly gilt as the most loathsome pill, or qualified and made palatable by the syrup of a dedication.

Those who have endeavoured to conquer this disgust have given the most forcible proofs of the truth of my argument: many of them, by venturing to prescribe to themselves, have so injudiciously taken their potions, that their minds have been thrown into various ill habits and disorders. Some have fallen into so lax a state, that they could neither digest nor keep any thing whatsoever. Nay, I have been acquainted with such as have taken the most innocent and salutary of these medicines, but by over-dosing themselves, and making no allowance for their own corrupt and acrimonious humours, have fallen into the most violent agitations, discharging such a quantity of undigested and virulent matter, that they have poisoned the neighbourhood round. Some, only upon taking the quantity of a few pages, have stared, raved, foamed at the mouth, and discovered all the symptoms of madness; while the very same dose has had the contrary effect upon others, operating only as an opiate.

The true and genuine food of the mind is *news*. That this is incontestable appears from the number of souls in this metropolis who subsist entirely upon this diet, without the least addition of any other nourishment whatsoever. In all ages and countries the poets have constantly described the avidity with which it is taken, by the figurative expressions of eating or drinking. Shakspeare uses a more general term:

With open mouth swallowing a tailor's news.

Another witty author calls news the manna of the day; alluding to that food with which the Israelites were supplied in the wilderness from day to day, and which in a very little time became stale and corrupt: as indeed Providence has in its wisdom ordained that all kinds of sustenance shall be in their nature corruptible, to remind man continually

of the dependency of his state on earth. Whereas physic (particularly of the modern chemical preparation) preserves its efficacy and virtues uncorrupted and unimpaired by time; a property it has in common with books, which never suffer by age, provided they are originally well composed, and of good ingredients. The principal of these ingredients is generally thought to be wit; and I fancy, Mr. Fitz-Adam, by the quantity of it with which you now and then season your speculations, that you have adopted that opinion. But let me tell you, sir, that though my supposition should be true, you are in the wrong to rely upon it too much: for though this seasoning should happen to preserve them for the admiration of future times, it is certainly your business to accommodate yourself to the taste of the present. If therefore you would make sure of customers, give us news; for which there is as constant a demand as for daily bread: and as for your wit, which is a luxury, treat it as the Dutch do their spices; burn half of it, and you may possibly render the remaining half of some value. But if you produce all you have for the market, you will soon find it become a mere drug, and bear no price.

I am,
Your friend and well-wisher,
A. B.

I have published this letter just as I received it: and as a proof that my correspondent is not singular in his opinion of wit, I must observe that the sagacious author of the late excellent abridgment of the history of France expresses a doubt that the present age may depreciate wit, as the last exploded learning. '*Prenons garde que le 18^{me} siècle ne decrie l'esprit, comme le 17^{me} avoit decrie l'erudition.*'

The sixteenth century produced the greatest number of men of the most profound erudition : and notwithstanding those of the seventeenth despised them for their laborious application, it is evident that it was owing to those labours that their successors attained knowledge with so much ease.

Towards the end of the last century, some possessed, and many affected, a pure taste in literature ; and setting up for a standard the writings of the ancients, very liberally rewarded those who imitated them the nearest in chastity of composition. But no sooner had Monsieur Galland translated the Arabian Tales, than the whole French nation ran mad, and would never after read any thing but wretched imitations of their most wild extravagancies ; for it ought to be observed, that some of those original stories contain useful morals and well-drawn pictures from common life : and it may be to those stories, perhaps, that we owe that species of writing which is at once so entertaining and instructive ; and in which a very eminent wit, to the honour of this nation, has shown himself so incomparably superior in drawing natural characters. But these were not the parts which had the fortune to please ; the enchantments, the monsters and transformations engaged all their attention : in-somuch that the famous Count Hamilton, with a pleasant indignation at this folly, wrote a tale of wonders, with design to ridicule these idle books by an aggravated imitation : but with an effect so directly contrary to his intention, that to this day France is continually producing little pieces of that extravagant turn ; while England, that land of liberty, equally indifferent to works of wit, and encouraging the licentiousness of the old comedy, can relish nothing but personal character, or wanton romance. Hence arises that swarm of memoirs, all filled with

abuse or impurity, which, whatever distinctions my present correspondent may make with relation to food and physic, are the poison of the mind.

The best antidote to this poison, and the most salutary in every respect, is that species of writing which may properly be termed regimen; which, partaking of the qualities both of physic and food, at once cleanses and sustains the patient. Such have I studied to make these my papers; which are therefore neither given daily for sustenance, nor occasionally as medicine, but regularly and weekly as an alterative. I have been extremely careful in the composition, that there shall not be wanting a proper quantity of sweet, acid, and salt; yet so justly proportioned, as not to cloy, sour, or lacerate the weakest stomach. The success I have met with will be better proved by the attestations of my patients than by any boasts of my own. Out of many hundreds of these attestations, I shall content myself at present with only publishing the following.

Extract of a letter from Bath.

SIR,

I can assure you with the greatest truth, that my three eldest daughters were for more than a whole winter most strangely affected with a nakedness in the shoulders; insomuch that the thinnest and slightest covering whatsoever was almost insupportable, especially in public. The best advice in the place was procured, but the disease increased with so much violence, that many expressed their opinion that every part of the body was in danger of the infection. At last, when nothing else would do, they were prevailed upon to enter into a regular course of your papers, and in a very few weeks, to the surprise of every body

in the rooms, were perfectly cured. I therefore beg of you, good sir, to let the bearer have thirty dozen of the papers, for which he will pay you.

I am, sir, &c.

The original letter, sealed with a coronet, may be seen at Mr. Dodsley's in Pall-Mall.

No. 71. THURSDAY, MAY 9, 1754.

Ne scuticâ dignum horribili sectère flagello. HOR.

I FLATTER myself it must have been frequently remarked, that I have hitherto executed the office I have undertaken without any of that harshness which may deserve the name of satire, but, on the contrary, with that gentle and good-humoured ridicule, which rather indicates the wishes of paternal tenderness than the dictates of magisterial authority. My edicts carry nothing with them penal. After I have spent five pages out of six to show that the ladies disfigure their persons, and the gentlemen their parks and gardens, by too much art, I make no other conclusion, than by coolly informing them, that each would be more beautiful, if nature was less disguised.

A certain great traveller, happening to take Florence in one of his tours, was much caressed and admired by the Great Duke. The variety of countries he had seen, and his vivacity in describing the customs, manners, and characters of their inhabitants, rendered him highly entertaining. But it happened

a little unfortunately that he had taken a fancy to adopt one of the fashions of the East, that of wearing whiskers, which he did in the fullest and largest extent of the mode. The Great Duke could by no means relish this fashion; and as constantly as he finished his second bottle, his disgust would break out, though never with greater harshness than in the following words: 'Signor Giramondo, I am not Duke of Tuscany while you wear those whiskers.' In like manner I say I am not Adam Fitz-Adam while the ladies wear such enormous hoops, such short petticoats, and such vast patches near the left eye; or while gentlemen ruin their fortunes and constitutions by play, or deform the face of nature by the fopperies of art.

The moderation of the Duke of Tuscany, who, with the help of a pair of scissors, might so easily have removed the object which at once offended and degraded him, is greatly to be preferred to the tyranny of Procrustes, whose delicate eye for proportion was apt to take such offence at an overgrown person, that he would order him to be shortened to the just standard by cutting off his feet. But a tyrannical system cannot be lasting: and violent measures must destroy that harmony which I am desirous should long subsist between me and those whom I have undertaken to govern, even were it probable that I could carry such measures into execution. But nothing exposes weakness so much as threats which we are not able to enforce. It is told us in the Acts, 'that forty of the Jews bound themselves under a curse, that they would neither eat nor drink till they had killed Paul.' We hear no more of those Jews, though the apostle survived their menaces. I flatter myself that I have no less zeal for the abolishing folly and false taste; yet I am so far from uttering any such threats, that I very frankly confess I intend

to eat and drink as heartily as if there was no such thing as folly remaining in the world. My enemies indeed have been pleased to throw out that it is owing to my desire of continuing to gratify those appetites, that I have not long ago entirely suppressed all folly whatsoever. They make no scruple of asserting, that there would not have been so much as a patch, pompon, or Chinese rail, remaining amongst us, if I had not thought proper to borrow a piece of policy from the rat-catchers, who suffer a small part of the vermin to escape, that their trade may not be at an end. But I must take the liberty of acquainting these gentlemen, that they know as little of me as of human nature, the chase after folly being like hunting a witch; if you run her down in one shape, she starts up in another, so that there is no manner of danger that the game will be destroyed. And I most solemnly declare, that wherever I have seen a beautiful face, or a fine garden, very grossly deformed by injudicious attempts at amendment, I have laboured with the greatest earnestness to effect a reformation. But where the conduct of my pupils, though sometimes faulty in itself, has been harmless in its consequences, I have constantly forborn, and will as constantly forbear, an officious reprehension of it, however disagreeable such forbearance may appear in the eyes of these gentlemen.

It is upon this plan that I have suppressed innumerable complaints from splenetic and ill-humoured correspondents: as a specimen of which complaints I shall lay before my readers the beginnings of some of their letters.

SIR,

I am greatly offended at the inconsistent behaviour of a lady of my acquaintance. You see her in a morning at St. James's church, and in the evening at the

play-house in Drury-lane. One would think that either religion should drive plays out of her head, or plays religion. Pray, Mr. Fitz-Adam, tell her how absurd —

SIR,

I trouble you with this letter to make my complaints of a very great evil, and to desire your animadversions upon it. I returned yesterday from a month's visit to a family in the country, where, in every particular but one, we passed our time as became reasonable beings. When the weather was good, we walked abroad; when bad, we amused ourselves within doors, either with entertaining conversation, or instructive books. But it was the custom of the family (though in all other respects very worthy people) constantly to play at cards for a whole hour before supper. Surely, Mr. Fitz-Adam, this method of killing time —

SIR,

I am shocked at the indecency of the modern head-dress. Do the ladies intend to lay aside all modesty, and go naked? —

This is the manner in which undistinguishing zeal treats things that are in themselves indifferent: for is it not matter of absolute indifference whether a lady wears on her head a becoming ornament of clean lace, or her own hair? Or if there be any preference, would it not be shown both from nature and experience to be on the side of the hair?

Num tu, quæ tenuit dives Achæmenes,
Aut pinguis Phrygiæ Mygdonias opes
Permutare velis crini Liciniæ?

Horace, we see, prefers a beautiful head of hair to

the riches of a king. But I cannot help giving it as my opinion, that Licinia's hair flowed in natural ringlets, without being tortured by irons, or confined by innumerable pins. Yet though I have seen with patience the cap diminishing to the size of a patch, I have not with the same unconcern observed the patch enlarging itself to the size of a cap. It is with great sorrow that I already see it in possession of that beautiful mass of blood which borders upon the eye. Should it increase on the side of that exquisite feature, what an eclipse have we to dread! But surely it is to be hoped the ladies will not give up that place to a plaster, which the brightest jewel in the universe would want lustre to supply.

I find that I am almost insensibly got upon the only subject which is likely to move my indignation, and carry me beyond the bounds of that moderation which I have boasted of above. I shall therefore conclude this paper with offering terms of composition to those of my fair readers who are willing to treat with me. The first is, that all those young ladies, who find it difficult to wean themselves from patches all at once, shall be allowed to wear them, in what number, size, and figure they please, on such parts of the body as are, or should be, most covered from sight. The second (and I shall offer no more) is, that any lady, who happens to prefer the simplicity of such ornaments to the glare of her jewels, shall, upon disposing of the said jewels for the benefit of the Foundling or any other hospital, be permitted to wear (by way of publishing her good deeds to the world) as many patches on her face as she has contributed hundreds of pounds to so laudable a benefaction. By pursuing this method, the public will be benefited, and patches, though no ornament, will be an honour, to the sex.

No. 72. THURSDAY, MAY 16, 1754.

*Ne cures ea quæ stultè miraris et optas.
Dicere et audire et meliora credere non vis.*

HOR.

It is an observation of the Duke de Rochefaucault, 'that there are many people in the world who would never have been in love if they had never heard talk of it.' As strange as this assertion may appear, there is nothing more certain, than that mankind pursue with much greater ardour what they are talked into an admiration of, than what they are prompted to by natural passions; nay, so great is the infatuation, that we frequently see them relinquishing real gratifications, for the sake of following ideal notions, or the accidental mode of thinking of the present times.

The story of the Princess Parizade, in the Arabian Tales, is a proper illustration of what I have here advanced. I shall give my readers a short abstract of this story, as it may furnish matter for reflection, and a very useful moral, to such of them as regulate their whole conduct, and even their desires, by fashion.

This princess, the happiest as well as most beautiful of her sex, lived with her two beloved brothers in a splendid palace, situated in the midst of a delightful park, and the most exquisite gardens in the East. It happened one day, while the princes were hunting, that an old woman came to the gate, and desired admittance to the oratory, that she might say her prayers. The princess no sooner knew of her request

than she granted it, giving orders to her attendants, that, after the good woman's prayers were ended, they should show her all the apartments of the palace, and then bring her into the hall where she herself was sitting. Every thing was performed as directed; and the princess, having regaled her guest with some fruits and sweetmeats, among many other questions, asked her what she thought of the palace.

'Madam,' answered the old woman, 'your palace is beautiful, regular, and magnificently furnished; its situation is delightful, and its gardens are beyond compare. But yet, if you will give me leave to speak freely, there are three things wanting to make it perfect.'——'My good mother,' interrupted the Princess Parizade, 'what are those three things? I conjure you in God's name to tell me what they are; and if there be a possibility of obtaining them, neither difficulties nor dangers shall stop me in the attempt.' 'Madam,' replied the old woman, 'the first of these three things is the Talking Bird, the second is the Singing Tree, and the third is the Yellow or Golden Water.' 'Ah, my good mother,' cried the princess, 'how much am I obliged to you for the knowledge of these things! They are no doubt the greatest curiosities in the world, and unless you can tell me where they are to be found, I am the most unhappy of women.' The old woman satisfied the princess in that material point, and then took her leave.

The story goes on to inform us, that when the two princes returned from hunting, they found the Princess Parizade so wrapt up in thought, that they imagined some great misfortune had befallen her, which when they had conjured her to acquaint them with, she only lifted up her eyes to look upon them, and then fixed them again upon the ground, telling them that nothing disturbed her. The entreaties of

the two princes, however, at last prevailed, and the princess addressed them in the following manner.

‘ You have often told me, my dear brothers, and I have always believed, that this house, which our father built, was complete in every thing: but I have learnt this day that it wants three things: these are, the Talking Bird, the Singing Tree, and the Yellow Water. An old woman has made this discovery to me, and told me the place where they are to be found, and the way thither. Perhaps you may look upon these rarities as trifles; but think what you please, I am fully persuaded that they are absolutely necessary; and whether you value them or not, I cannot be easy without them.’

The sequel tells us, that after the Princess Parizade had expressed herself with this proper spirit upon the occasion, the brothers, in pity to her wants, went in pursuit of these *necessaries*, and that failing in the enterprise, they were one after another turned into stone.

The application of this tale is so universal, that the enumerating particulars is almost an unnecessary labour. The whole fashionable world are so many Parizades; and things not only useless in their natures, but also ugly in themselves, from having been once termed *charming* by some fashionable leaders of modern taste, are now become so *necessary* that *nobody can do without them*.

But though this story happens to be told of a lady, the folly it particularizes is chiefly to be found in the other sex: I mean, in respect to the pernicious consequences attending vain and chimerical pursuits.

If we enter into the strictest examination of these idle longings in the women, we shall find that they seldom amount to any thing more than a dissipation of their pin-money, without any other ill consequence

than that of turning their thoughts from some real good, which they actually possess, to an imaginary expectation. The passion for shells, old china, and the like, is confessedly trifling; but it is only blamable in proportion to the anxiety with which it is pursued: but what is this in comparison of the desolation of ambition, the waste of magnificence, and the ruin of play?

Madame Montespán's coach and six mice was not a more idle, though it was a less mischievous folly than the armies of her lover, Louis the Fourteenth. The ambition of that monarch to emulate the conquerors of antiquity; of Cæsar to rival Alexander; of Alexander to resemble the hero of his darling poem, the *Iliad*; the designs of Pyrrhus, and the project of Xerxes; what were they but counterparts to a passion for the Talking Bird, the Singing Tree, and the Yellow Water?

To descend a little into private life, how many do we see daily talked into a rage for building, gardening, painting, and divers other expenses, to the embarrassing a fortune which would more than sufficiently supply the necessaries of life? Among the numbers who have changed a sober plan of living for one of riot and excess, the greatest part have been converted by the arguments in a drinking song. Thousands have taken the same fruitless and expensive journey, because they have heard that it is very John Trott not to have visited France, and that a person who has not been abroad has seen nothing. I was once told by a gentleman, who had undone himself by keeping running horses, that he owed his ruin to a strong impression made upon him, when a boy, by his father's butler, who happened to declare in his hearing, 'that it was a creditable thing to keep good cattle; and that if he was a gentleman,

he should take great pleasure in being always well mounted.'

But to apply our fable to the most recent instance of this species of infatuation: How often have we seen an honest country gentleman, who has lived a truly happy life, blessed in his family, amused with his farms and gardens, entertained by his own beneficence, usefully employed in the administration of justice, or in reconciling the differences of his litigious neighbours; but who being talked into an opinion of the great service a man might do his country, as well as honour to himself, by getting into parliament, has given up all his real enjoyments and useful occupations for this imaginary phantom, which has only taught him by experience, what he might have learnt from example, that the family interest, as it is called, is too often the destruction of the family estate.

As to all those gentlemen who have gained their elections, I most sincerely wish them joy: and for those who have been disappointed, and who now may have leisure to turn their thoughts from their country to themselves, I beg leave to recommend to them the pleasures, and I may add, the duties, of domestic life: in comparison of which all other advantages are nothing more than the Talking Bird, the Singing Tree, and the Yellow Water.

No. 73. THURSDAY, MAY 23, 1754.

— *Ille potens sui*
Lætusque deget, cui licet in diem
Diaisse, Vixi: cras vel atrâ
Nube polum Pater occupato:
Vcl sole puro: non tamen irritum
Quodcunque retro est, efficiet.—

HOR.

IT was the saying of Epaminondas, upon being asked which of all his friends he esteemed most, that 'they must all die before such a question could be answered.' But if Epaminondas had lived in this country, and in these times, he would have known that the greatest heroes, at their deaths, are frequently those who have been the greatest villains in their lives. And yet most men are apt to think like Epaminondas, and to pass their judgments upon a man's life from what he has said and acted in the last scene of it; that season being thought the season of sincerity, because dissimulation is to no purpose, and because the conscience finds ease in disclosing crimes which can no longer profit us, and which threaten us with destruction in the state to which we are hastening, unless truly confessed and repented of in this. But of those who die in their beds, as well as malefactors, I have known and heard of many debauched and dissolute men who have met death with the utmost patience and resignation; while the pious and moral christian, whose life has been spent in the constant exercise of religion and virtue, has beheld its approaches with confusion; and from a consciousness of not having done exactly

as he ought to have done upon every occasion, has died fearful and desponding.

From hence it will appear that those who judge of men's lives by their behaviour at their deaths will be sometimes mistaken. The contempt of death may be owing in many to insensibility; in some to a brutal courage; in others to the dislike of life; in a few to philosophy; as well as in many to a well-grounded hope of a happy hereafter. The jest of Sir Thomas More, upon the scaffold, who, after laying his head upon the block, bade the executioner stay till he had put aside his beard, because that had committed no treason, was no more a proof of the goodness of his life (if there had been no other voucher) than that of the murderer at the gallows, who entreated the hangman not to touch his neck with his fingers, because he was ticklish. The thief, for the reputation of dying hard, as it is called, and the philosopher, to support the doctrine he has taught, that death is no evil, will rush into eternity with an affected bravery, and offend Heaven rather than confess their apprehensions of dissolution.

Men are sometimes hypocrites in their last moments through pride, as they have been all their lives through interest; nor will it appear strange that they are so: for as every man is desirous (if it can be done without much trouble) of leaving a good name behind him, he is unwilling to confess at his death that he has been a rogue all his life. Upon principles like these have the worst of criminals gone to the gallows with as much triumph and exultation as the martyrs of old did to the stake for the cause of Heaven and religion.

For my own part (and I hope it will not be imputed to me as presumption) I should think of death with much greater terror than I do, if I considered it as the final end of being. The thought of anni-

hilation to one whose life had not been marked with any of the capital vices, and whose frailties, he humbly hopes, are no more than those which are incident to humanity ; who has been unprofitable to his Maker because he was human, and to mankind because unfriended by fortune ; and whose connexions in this life have been such as to make him desirous of their eternal duration ; I say, to one who thus thinks, and who hopes he has thus lived, the thought of annihilation would make death most terrible. And yet, in the circle of my own acquaintance, I have found a man of a decent life and conversation, who wished well to every body, and who loved and enjoyed his friends, but who, through a tedious and painful illness, had conceived sleep to be so great a blessing as to make him wish for an eternity of it ; and having taken pains to believe that death was such a sleep, he talked of it with pleasure, and within a very few hours of his exit, as a confirmation that he died in the opinion he had professed, he wrote the following epitaph upon himself, and directed it to a friend with his own hand.

Beneath this stone, to worms a prey,
 (Himself as poor and vile as they)
 Eugenio lies in hopes of *rest*,
 Who deem'd all farther hope a jest :
 Who ne'er on Fancy's wings could rise
 To heav'n-built domes above the skies ;
 Content from whence he sprung to lie,
 Nor wish'd to live, nor fear'd to die.

I shall only observe upon the writer of this epitaph, that as I believe him to have been honest and sincere, it is but charity to hope that he is now rejoicing in his mistake.

There is nothing more true in the general than that those people are the most averse to death, who have had the least enjoyment of life ; as, on the con-

trary, those who have enjoyed life most have been the least anxious about dying. To many of my readers such an assertion as this may appear strange and unaccountable: but a very little inquiry will, I believe, convince them of the fact.

Men who, through necessitous circumstances, gloomy dispositions, or sickly habits of body, have lived in perpetual discontent, are apt to flatter themselves that life is in arrears to them: that as their days have hitherto passed without enjoyment, every thing is to be made up to them before they come to die. They look upon riches, pleasure, and health, to be blessings that never tire, and consider the possessors of them as living in a state of uninterrupted happiness, which they long to taste, and cannot bear the thoughts of dying before they have enjoyed. Thus are the miserable in love with life, and afraid of death. Hope still flatters them with happy days; and death, that would inevitably cut off that hope, is beheld by them as the cruellest of all enemies.

Let us cast an eye now to those in happier situations; to those who are contented with their lot, and who (if there are any such) have lived all their days in health, cheerfulness, and affluence. What can tomorrow bring to such as these that they have not known before, unless it be misfortune? It is from this consideration that such persons are more resigned to dying. We part more easily with what we possess than with our expectations of what we wish for: the reason of it is, that what we expect is always greater than what we enjoy. And hence it is that the enjoyment of life makes us less desirous of its continuance, than if it had hitherto given us nothing, and fed us only with expectation.

I have waved in this place all consideration of a future existence, and have considered the happy and unhappy only in regard to this life. If we take re-

ligion and a future state into the question, the happy here will have a thousand times stronger reasons for being resigned to death than the unhappy. Pain, sickness, and misfortune, as they do not wean us from a love of life, so neither do they beget in us a proper frame and temper to prepare for death. It is the enjoyment of life that calls forth our gratitude to Him who gave it; that opens the heart to acts of kindness and benevolence; and, by giving us a taste here of the happiness of heaven, excites in us a desire of securing it through eternity; and by thus securing it, makes us eager to embrace it; enabling us to resign with joy the happiness which is uncertain and temporal, for that which is without change and without end.

I shall conclude this essay with observing, that those who make religion to consist in the contempt of this world and its enjoyments are under a very fatal and dangerous mistake. As life is the gift of Heaven, it is religion to enjoy it. He therefore who can be happy in himself, and who contributes all that is in his power towards the happiness of others (and none but the virtuous can so be and so do), answers most effectually the ends of his creation, is an honour to his nature, and a pattern to mankind.



No. 74. THURSDAY, MAY 30, 1754.



** Dicetur meritâ Nox quoque naniâ. HOR.*

I HAVE lately got a set of new correspondents; and have had the favour of letters from various persons, with whom I have not the honour to be in the least

acquainted. They seem, indeed, to be of another order of beings, as they seldom make their appearance till the ordinary race of mortals are asleep in their beds. It is astonishing to think how much business these people carry on in this populous city, at that season which nature has allotted for rest: for it must be owned of these children of the night, that they are as diligent in their several callings as those of the day.

For the entertainment of my readers I shall lay before them the contents of some of these extraordinary despatches: and as I look upon the watchmen, by virtue of their office, to have the right of precedence among these sons of darkness, I shall give them the preference in this paper.

One of these gentlemen, who calls himself king of the night, complains of the great increase of riots and disturbances which happen nightly in the streets of this metropolis. He commends his majesty for the paternal care he has shown his people by recommending it to his parliament to provide means of putting a stop to these disorders; and declares he will use his utmost endeavours to assist him in so good a work.

Another of this venerable fraternity, who, it seems, has been lately disciplined by a set of bucks, acquaints me with the antiquity and dignity of his office, and of the high esteem in which those who watch for the public safety have always been held by the people. He complains of the insult which, in his person, has been offered to the dignity of magistracy, and the sacredness of office; and concludes, that as he has served his country faithfully in this public capacity many years, he intends, after the example of other great men, to return to his private calling of a cobbler. A link-boy, indeed, who begs my honour would prefer him to the post of a

watchman, does not seem to have so high a notion of the dignity or usefulness of that ancient order: for he says, if he should be so happy as to obtain his desire, he shall have nothing to do but to sleep at his stand; whereas, in his present calling, he is obliged to be upon the watch all night long.

Whether the author of the following advertisement is in jest or earnest, I am unable to determine: however, at his request I have inserted it.

‘Whereas W. Y. who lately kept the Round-house in the parish of * * *, well known to several of the quality, gentry, and others, is lately removed to the Knave of Clubs in the same street; this is to entreat all such gentlemen and ladies as used to honour him with their company to continue their favours; and to assure them of the same civility and good usage as formerly.

‘*N. B.* There are private rooms for those who play deep.’

Innumerable are the letters, cards, and messages, which I have received from places of the most polite resort. In particular I must confess my obligations to a venerable matron in Covent-Garden, who invites me to spend an evening at her house, where she assures me none but people of the best fashion are admitted. She speaks much in my praise for my endeavours to promote virtue; and is extremely severe upon the low and dirty houses of intrigue which have brought that part of the town into so much disrepute. She adds very obligingly, in a postscript, that she has a very fine creature of sixteen, who has never seen company, and whom she reserves purposely for Mr. Fitz-Adam.

I cannot omit to mention the honour Mr. * * * has done me by inviting me to the next masquerade, and offering me a domino for that purpose. But as I can see no reason why people, whose intentions are

honest, should be ashamed to show their faces, I have declined his invitation. His argument for the morality of these midnight meetings, viz. 'that by reducing all mankind to a level, they teach the great a useful lesson against pride,' is, I own, ingenious; though I am apt to think as men's manners are generally borrowed from their outward circumstances, a lady of quality, when she finds herself degraded to the rank of a milk-maid, may be tempted to familiarities, which she never would have suffered in her exalted sphere.

But the most extraordinary of all the invitations I have been favoured with is from a society in St. Giles's. This letter is written in a fair hand by the secretary, who tells me he has the misfortune to be stone blind: but I must not wonder at that, he says, for the most active young fellow among them is a poor old cripple, who plies all day long in the Mews. He assures me, that notwithstanding their miserable looks by day, I shall find them at night a set of the merriest fellows in the world; and as to drinking, wenching, gaming, and the like fashionable amusements, no gentlemen can go beyond them.

I have letters by me from people of all ranks and conditions, giving an account of the different employments and diversions of the night; so that, was it not for fear of disturbing the peace of reputable families, I could make as many pleasant discoveries as the ingenious author of the *Devil upon Two Sticks*.

I have the morning adventures of a noted buck, and the midnight rambles of a female rake. A lady who writes to me from Bridges-street complains of the insufferable insolence of watchmen and constables; insomuch that she can hardly walk along the streets about her lawful occasions without being stopt and questioned by these Jacks in an office.

There is something so reasonable in Lady Betty

Moonlight's proposal, that I cannot refuse giving it to my readers. Her ladyship complains that her first sleep is constantly broke by the noise of carts, drays, and hackney-coaches, or by the vociferous cries of small-coal, brick-dust, kitchen-stuff, &c. She thinks it very hard that people of quality should be disturbed at such unseasonable hours; and therefore hopes that the parliament should take it into consideration. She proposes, that as they have already altered the year, an act may be passed next session to turn night into day; which, she observes, will be more agreeable to their own times of doing business.

As I have adapted the former part of this paper more particularly to the taste of those who frequent the polite circles in this town, I shall now consider my grave readers, and present them with the following composition on the same subject.

ODE TO NIGHT.

The busy cares of day are done;
 In yonder western clouds the sun
 Now sets, in other worlds to rise,
 And glad with light the nether skies.

With ling'ring pace the parting day retires,
 And slowly leaves the mountain tops, and gilded spires.

Yon azure cloud, enrobed with white,
 Still shoots a gleam of fainter light:
 At length descends a browner shade;
 At length the glimm'ring objects fade;
 Till all submit to Night's impartial reign,
 And undistinguish'd darkness covers all the plain.

No more the ivy-crowned oak
 Resounds beneath the woodman's stroke.

Now Silence holds her solemn sway;
Mute is each bush, and every spray;
Nought but the sound of murmuring rills is heard,
Or from the mould'ring tower, Night's solitary bird.

Hail, sacred hour of peaceful rest!
Of power to charm the troubled breast!
By thee the captive slave obtains
Short respite from his galling pains;
Nor sighs for liberty, nor native soil;
But for a while forgets his chains, and sultry toil.

No horrors hast thou in thy train,
No scorpion lash, no clanking chain.
When the pale murderer round him spies
A thousand grisly forms arise,
When shrieks and groans arouse his palsied fear,
'Tis guilt alarms his soul, and conscience wounds his
ear.

The village swain whom Phillis charms,
Whose breast the tender passion warms,
Wishes for thy all-shadowing veil,
To tell the fair his lovesick tale:
Nor less impatient of the tedious day,
She longs to hear his tale, and sigh her soul away.

Oft by the covert of thy shade
Leander woo'd the Thracian maid:
Through foaming seas his passion bore,
Nor fear'd the ocean's thund'ring roar.
The conscious virgin from the sea-girt tow'r
Hung out the faithful torch to guide him to her bow'r.

Oft at thy silent hour the sage
Pores on the fair instructive page;

Or, wrapt in musings deep, his soul
Mounts active to the starry pole :

There pleased to range the realms of endless night,
Numbers the stars, or marks the comet's devious light.

Thine is the hour of converse sweet,
When sprightly wit and reason meet :
Wit, the fair blossom of the mind,
But fairer still with reason join'd.

Such is the feast thy social hours afford,
When eloquence and Granville join'd the friendly
board.

Granville, whose polish'd mind is fraught
With all that Rome or Greece e'er taught ;
Who pleases and instructs the ear,
When he assumes the critic's chair,
Or from the Stagirite or Plato draws
The arts of civil life, the spirit of the laws.

O let me often thus employ
The hour of mirth and social joy !
And glean from Granville's learned store
Fair science and true wisdom's lore.
Then will I still implore thy longer stay,
Nor change thy festive hours for sunshine and the day.

No. 75. THURSDAY, JUNE 6, 1754.

I HAVE hinted more than once in the course of these papers, that the present age, notwithstanding the vices and follies with which it abounds, has the hap-

pineness of standing as high in my opinion as any age whatsoever. But it has been always the fashion to believe, that from the beginning of the world to the present day, men have been increasing in wickedness; and though we have the Bible to turn to, which gives us the history of mankind before the flood, and of the Jews after it, we have still the humility to retain this opinion, and to lament the amazing degeneracy of the present times. But the eye of a philosopher can penetrate into this false humility, and discover it to be mere peevishness and discontent. The truth is, that the present times, like our wives and our other possessions, are our own, and therefore we have no relish of them.

Many of my readers may possibly object to these encomiums on the times, imagining they may tend to make men satisfied with what they are, instead of inciting them to become what they ought to be. But it was always my opinion (and I believe it to be universally true) that men are more likely to be *praised* into virtue, than to be *railed* out of vice. It is a maxim in every body's mouth, that reputation once lost is never to be recovered. He therefore to whom you give an ill name will have little or no encouragement to endeavour at a good one, as knowing that if a character of infamy is once fixed, no change of behaviour can have power to redeem it. On the contrary, the man to whom you give a good name, though he should have merited a bad one, will find in his commerce with the world the advantages of such a name, and from conviction of those advantages be so solicitous to deserve it, as to become in reality the good man you have called him. People may reason away the merit of such a person's behaviour if they please, by ascribing it solely to self-love; they may add too, if they choose (and they have my hearty leave), that all virtue whatsoever has its source in

that passion : if this be true (though the revealers of such truths cannot be complimented on their intention to promote virtue) can there be a stronger argument for goodness, than that it is necessary to our happiness? It is said of that sagacious insect the bee, that he extracts honey from poison : and a mind, rightly turned, may draw instruction even from these gentlemen. But to return to my subject.

If people, when they are railing against the present times, instead of asserting in the gross that they are more wicked than the past, would content themselves with pointing out what are really the vices that have gathered head amongst us ; if, for instance, they were to say that luxury and gaming are at present at a much higher pitch than formerly, I should be far from contradicting them. These are indeed the vices of the times ; but for the first of them, I am afraid we must content ourselves with complaints instead of offering at a remedy : for as luxury is always owing to too much wealth, Providence in its wisdom has so ordered it, that in due course of time it will destroy itself. The cure therefore of luxury is poverty ; a remedy which, though we do not care to prescribe to ourselves, we are preparing at great pains and expense for those that are to come after us. Of gaming I shall only observe, that, like luxury, it will in time work out its own cure ; and at the rate it goes on at present, one should imagine it cannot last long.

I know of but one evil more that seems to have gathered any degree of strength in these times, and that is corruption : for, as to extravagance and a love of pleasure, I include them in the article of luxury. And perhaps the evil of corruption, as it is now practised, may admit of palliation : for though it has been asserted by certain writers upon ethics, that it is unlawful to do evil, that good may ensue, yet

something may be said in favour of a candidate for a seat in parliament, who, if he should be tempted to commit the small evil of bribing a borough or a few particulars in a county, it is, no doubt, in order to effect so great a good as the preservation of the liberty, the property, the happiness, the virtue, and the religion of a whole nation.

As to all other vices, I believe they will be found to exist amongst us pretty much in the same degree as heretofore, forms only changing. Our grandfathers used to get drunk with strong beer and port; we get drunk with claret and champaign. They would lie abominably to conceal their wenching; we lie as abominably in boasting of ours. They stole slyly in at the back-door of a bagnio; we march in boldly at the fore-door, and immediately steal out slyly at the back-door. Our mothers were prudes; their daughters coquettes. The first dressed like modest women, and perhaps were wantons; the last dress like women of the town, and perhaps are virtuous. Those treated without hanging out a sign; these hang out a sign without intending to treat. To be still more particular; the abuse of power, the views of patriots, the flattery of dependents, and the promises of great men, are, I believe, pretty much the same now as in former ages. Vices that we have no relish for, we part with for those we like; giving up avarice for prodigality, hypocrisy for profligacy, and lewdness for play.

But as I have instanced in this essay the particular vices of the times, it would be doing them injustice if I neglected to observe, that humanity, charity, and the civilities of life, never abounded so much as now. I must also repeat, what has already been taken notice of in these papers, that our virtues receive a lustre, and our vices a softening, by manners and decorum.

There is a folly indeed (for I will not call it a vice) with which the ladies of this age are particularly charged: it is, that not only their airs and their dress, but even their faces are French. I wish with all my heart that I could preserve my integrity, and vindicate my fair countrywomen from this imputation; but I am sorry to say it, what by travelling abroad, and by French milliners, mantua-makers, and hair-cutters at home, our politest assemblies seem to be filled with foreigners. But how will it astonish many of my readers to be told, that while they are extolling the days of good Queen Bess, they are complimenting that very reign in which these fashions were originally introduced! But because in a matter of so much consequence no man's bare word should be taken, I shall make good my assertion by publishing an authentic letter, written by that subtle minister Sir William Cecil (afterwards Lord Burleigh) to Sir Henry Norris, Queen Elizabeth's ambassador at the court of France. This letter was originally printed in the year sixteen hundred and sixty-three, among a collection of state letters called *Scrinia Ceciliana*, or *Mysteries of Government*, and is as follows:

‘SIR,

‘The queen’s majesty would fain have a tailor that had skill to make her apparel both after the French and Italian manner: and she thinketh that you might use some means to obtain some one such there as serveth the queen, without mentioning any manner of request in the queen’s majesty’s name. First to cause my lady your wife to use some such means to get one, as thereof knowledge might not come to the queen’s mother’s ears, of whom the queen’s majesty thinketh thus; that if she did understand that it were a matter wherein her majesty

might be pleased, she would offer to send one to the queen's majesty: nevertheless if it cannot be so obtained by this indirect means, then her majesty would have you devise some other good means to obtain one that were skilful.

‘Yours in all truth,

‘W. CECIL.’

I shall only observe upon this letter (which I confess to be a masterpiece for subtlety and contrivance) that if by the introduction and increase of French fashions, our religion and government are also in time to be French (which many worthy patriots and elderly gentlewomen are in dreadful apprehension of), we ought no doubt to throw off all regard to the memory of Queen Elizabeth, and to lament that her minister was not impeached of high treason, for advising and encouraging so pernicious an attempt against that Magna Charta of dress, the old English ruff and fardingale.

No. 76. THURSDAY, JUNE 13, 1754.

Diruit, ædificat, mutat quadrata rotundis. HOR.

AT this season of the year, when every man is raising his share of dust on the public roads, in order to feast his lungs with fresh air, and his eyes with novelty, I am led to consider a modern character, scarce ever touched upon before, and which hitherto has obtained no other name from the public than the general one of an *improver*.

In former times, when the garden was made for

fruit, the water for fish, and the park for venison, the servants presided in their several departments, and the lord of the manor and his guests had nothing to do but to sit down and cram themselves with the products of each. But since the genius of taste has thought fit to make this island his principal residence, and has taught us to enjoy the gifts of nature in a less sensual manner, the master of the place thinks it incumbent on him to change the old system, to take all under his own care, and to see that every thing be of his own doing. Alteration therefore must of necessity be the first great principle of an improver. When he shows you a plantation, it is constantly prefaced with 'Here stood a wall.' If he directs your eye over an extent of lawn, 'There,' says he, 'we were crowded up with trees.' The lake, you are told, was the spot where stood the old stables or the kitchen garden; and the mount was formerly a horsepond. When you have heard this, you are next of all to know how every thing is to *be altered still farther*: for as the improver himself never enjoys the present state of things, he labours to disturb the satisfaction you express, by telling you that on the mount is to be a building; that the water is to be altered in shape, size, and level, and must have a cascade and a bridge; that the largest trees in the plantation must be cut down, to give air and sunshine to shrubs and flowers.—In short, the description of what *is to be* continues through the whole evening of your arrival; and when he has talked you to sleep, and it is evident that you can hear no longer, he compassionately dismisses you to rest, knowing that late hours are incompatible with his designs upon you in the morning. Innocent of these designs, you enjoy the quiet of your chamber, comforting yourself that you must have seen and heard all, and that *the bitterness of improvement is over*. Or if you are sus-

picious of any remaining fatigue, and are therefore prepared with the proper remonstrances and evasions, they will avail you nothing against an old practised improver: for the instant you have breakfasted, he proposes your taking a turn or two in the bowling-green for a little fresh air; to which you readily assent; and without imagining there can be any occasion for stepping out of your slippers, you advance with him to the end of the green, where a door in a sunk fence unexpectedly opens to the park. And here, as he assures you *the grass is short*, you are led through all the pleasures of unconnected variety, with this recommendation, that it is but a little way from the Palladian portico to the Gothic tower; from the Lapland to the Chinese house; or from the temple of Venus to the Hermitage. By this time you are insensibly enticed to a great distance from the house; when on a sudden he shows you over the park-wall a number of labourers mending the highway; and, *since you are got so far*, wishes you to go a little farther, that he may take this opportunity to give a few necessary instructions, and that the road may be mended with the advantage of your opinion and concurrence. In vain do you pull out your watch; in vain remonstrate to him how late it is, or how rude it will be to make the ladies wait dinner: in vain do you try to move him by stroking your chin, and showing him a most persuasive length of beard, or implore his compassion on your Morocco slippers, pleading that if you had expected so long a walk, you would have put on your strong shoes.—He knows that if you had apprehended a walk of half the distance, he never could have moved you from your easy chair; and being thoroughly sensible that it will not be in his power to get you so far again, is resolved to make his advantage of the present opportunity; so leads you to every ditch that is empty-

ing, or brick-kiln that is reeking for him ; to his barn that is to be turned into a church, or to his farm that is to be made a ruin for the sake of his prospect ; till at length he brings you so late home, that you are obliged to sit down undressed to a spoiled dinner with a family out of humour.

I remember the good time, when the price of a haunch of venison with a country friend was only half an hour's walk upon a hot terrace ; a descent to the two square fish-ponds overgrown with a frog-spawn ; a peep into the hogsty, or a visit to the pigeon-house. How reasonable was this, when compared with the attention now expected from you to the number of temples, pagodas, pyramids, grottoes, bridges, hermitages, caves, towers, hot-houses, &c. &c. for which the day is too short, and which brings you to a meal fatigued and overcome with heat, denied the usual refreshment of clean linen, and robbed of your appetite !

Having now sufficiently warned the visitor of what he is to guard against, it is but just I should give some few hints for the service of the improver, whom I must always consider (a little vanity excepted) as acting upon principles of benevolence, and from a desire of giving pleasure. It is this principle that blinds and misleads his judgment, by suggesting to him that he shall find from the visitor and others, who come to see his works, returns of equal civility and good-humour. But it will be expedient for him to reflect that these gentlemen do not always bring with them that desire to be pleased, which, by his own disposition, he is too apt to suppose, and which, one would think, should be essential to every part of pleasure : for (exclusive of that natural inclination to censure, which so generally attends all exercise of the judgment) on these occasions, every occurrence of the day will probably administer to the spleen of the

critic. If the weather be too hot, or too cold, for him; if it be windy or showery; if he has slept ill the night before; if he is hungry or sick; if he is tired or sore; if he has lost a bet upon the road; if he has quarrelled with his friend; if he has been rebuked by his wife; or, in short, if any thing has offended him, he is sure to take revenge in full, by finding fault with every thing that was designed for his entertainment. In this disposition of mind, there is nothing safe but the shady gravel walk, with the few plain and necessary resting-places, which leads to the undisguised farm, or the navigable river. He will be sure to allow you no postulatum. He absolutely denies the existence of hermits, mandarins, and the whole heathen system of divinities. He disputes the antiquity of your ruin, and the genuineness of your hermitage: nay, he will descend to cavil at the bell with which the hermit is supposed to ring himself to prayers. He is so cruel as to controvert your supposition that the new made water is a river, though he knows it must have cost you an immense sum, and that it covers the richest meadow-ground you are master of. He leads the company to every sunk fence which you choose should be unobserved. If he suspects a building to be new-fronted, he finds out a private way to the decayed side of it; happy if he can discover it to have been a stable or a pigsty. His report of your place, after he has left it, is exactly of a piece with his behaviour while there. He either describes it as a bog that will not bear a horse, or as a sand that cannot produce a blade of grass. If he finds in reality neither bog nor barren sand, his wishes supply his belief, and he labours to persuade himself and others that one of these defects is the characteristic of your soil, but that you hate to be told of it, and always deny it.

One cannot but admire his ingenuity in particular

cases, where it has been judged impossible to find a fault. If you lead him to a knoll of uncommon verdure, varied with the fortunate disposition of old oaks, commanding the most rural scenes, and, at a proper distance, the view of a large city, he shrugs up his shoulders, and tells you it wants water. If your principal object be a lake, he will strain a point to report it green and stagnated; or else take the advantage of a thunder-storm to pronounce it white or yellow. If you have a stream, he laments the frequency of floods; if a tide-river, the smell of mud at low-water. He detects your painted cascade; misconstrues your inscriptions, and puns upon your mottos. Within doors he doubts if your pictures are originals, and expresses his apprehensions that your statues will bring the house down.

As I wish most sincerely to reconcile these gentlemen to each other, I shall recommend to the improver the example of a particular friend of mine. It is said in Milton, that before the angel disclosed to Adam the prospect from the hill in paradise, he

——— purged with euphrasy and rue

His visual nerve, for he had much to see :

so this gentleman (borrowing the hint from Milton, but preferring a modern ophthalmic) upon the arrival of his visitors, takes care to purge their visual nerves with a sufficient quantity of champagne; after which, he assures me, they never *see* a fault in his improvements.

No. 77. THURSDAY, JUNE 20, 1754.

TO MR. FITZ-ADAM.

SIR,

I AM the daughter (I will not say of a gentleman, but) of one, who, by a constant attention to gain, and many lucky circumstances in life, from a very mean condition, arrived at the highest character of gentility amongst his neighbours in a part of this island, where farmers are almost the only, and without dispute the proudest gentry. Being tolerably handsome, and a favourite child, I was sent very early to a country boarding-school; and was allowed to bring from it some tendencies to elegance and politeness, rather exceeding those that are generally acquired in such places; and which, for want of a better name, I shall call a kind of half good-breeding.

Thus accomplished, you may imagine I soon had many admirers; but being young and unexperienced, I prudently left the choice of the happy man to my father's decision; which choice, after due caution, he made: but though exceeding notable himself, yet happening to engage with an old gentleman more notable, it is said, and I believe with truth, that he was outwitted. In the holy estate of matrimony I lived a few years, without any thing to relieve the dulness and insipidity of a husband's conversation, but now and then a visit from his relations, and a game at cards.

When my widowhood commenced, then opened the scene. And though my jointure was not equal to the fortune my father had paid, yet having many good prospects, the value of which I had learnt to calculate

with great accuracy, I resolved to regulate my conduct accordingly.

And now it was that I engaged in the strangest project that ever entered a whimsical woman's head. It was this; to collect all the most haughty and insolent forms that I had ever heard to have been practised in the rejection of lovers; to enter those forms in my pocket-book; to get them by heart, and to use them occasionally as circumstances might admit; arguing with myself, that I should hasten the succession of lovers in proportion to the number of pretenders I baffled and discarded.

The first who offered me his addresses in my new situation was Mr. Twist the mercer. He made his visit in about two months after my husband's decease; and upon being shown into my parlour, really surprised me with so strange and ridiculous a figure of a man, that it was not without the utmost difficulty I was able to preserve any composure of countenance. Pale, trembling, looking askance, and out of breath, he muttered over something in broken words and half sentences, about 'cruel delays—decencies—boldness—and,' at last, 'his ambition of being admitted my most humble servant.' Fixing my eyes full upon him, I answered, 'That I was very sorry he should come at so unseasonable a time; for that I had no thoughts of parting with my footman: but if he should be out of place when I had a vacancy, and would call again, I might perhaps prefer him to my service.' The poor man, unable to bear such a shock, fell into the most violent distortions of face, and left me, with precipitation, to enjoy my triumph alone.

The next who honoured me with an application of the same kind, but without the same dismal and rueful grimaces, was Mr. Frankly, an under officer in his majesty's customs. He approached me with a pretty good air, and with an easy unconstrained

utterance declared, 'That he had long been charmed with the agreableness of my person and behaviour; that they had made the deepest impressions on his heart; and that he did not despair of finding in my fair bosom something susceptible of the same tender and elegant sentiments.' Piqued and amazed at the confidence of the man, my memory and presence of mind had almost failed me: but recovering in an instant, I made him a curtsy, and assured him, 'That, though he knew it not, I was really the mistress of that house; but that my maid Mary was in the kitchen, who would no doubt be highly pleased with so fine a speech, which I hoped he had got by heart, and would be as capable of repeating to his mistress as he had been to me.' I looked to see if my gentleman was not sinking into the floor; but to my utter confusion, he made me a low bow, and with a most significant glance protested, 'That he was become perfectly sensible of his mistake, and that his next visit should be to my maid; for that it was impossible for Mrs. Mary to return an answer to any thing he might say to her, so utterly destitute of good sense and good manners.' As soon as he was gone I had recourse to my pocket-book, crossed out my two first common-places, and wrote in the margin, 'N. B. Too much alike, and not to use either of them again on any account whatsoever.'

My third innamorato was Mr. Smart, a young attorney, very spruce and very much a coxcomb. As he lived in the neighbourhood, we had a slight acquaintance. One evening he came to my house, stayed supper, and after drinking a glass or two of wine, began a rhapsody of nonsense about flames, darts, killing eyes, wounds, and death. It is enough that I was able to comprehend his meaning; and therefore putting on an air of seriousness and concern, I assured him, 'That I was most prodigiously

sorry to see him so flustered: I supposed that he had been drinking before he came to my house; for otherwise it was impossible he should be disguised to such a degree. I hoped it was only an accidental thing, and that he would take care not to contract habits so extremely prejudicial to his character and complexion.' He looked so tame and foolish, that for the life of me I could not forbear pursuing my blow; and therefore ordering my servant to light him home, I recommended strongly to him to clear his stomach with a quart or two of warm water before he went to rest: and in the morning I sent a card with compliments and inquiries after his health; hoping he was as well as could be expected after his last night's irregularity. He kept my man two hours, and then returned me the following answer, fairly engrossed upon a clean queen of hearts.

'Mr. Smart's compliments to Mrs. G——, and thanks for her kind message. He shall not contend that he is in his sober wits: no, he is proud to own himself drunk with the large draughts of love drawn from her bright eyes.'

This I thought was pretty enough; I therefore put the card between the proper pages in my book, and under the common-place to which it related wrote, 'Memorandum, a good thing, and may do again, with a little variation.'

My fourth humble servant was Doctor Scarfe, the minister of the parish. He was really a good sort of a gentleman; and to say the truth, I had for a long time played my artillery directly at him, as I imagined without success, but not without a most vexatious chagrin at his seeming insensibility. However, when I least expected any such thing, I perceived I had conquered his stubborn heart: and then I resolved to take some revenge for the trouble it had cost me. His advice and assistance, which were useful to me

in the management of my affairs, gave him a claim to a more frequent and familiar reception than I vouchsafed to any other male visitant. One day, upon my thanking him, in civil terms, for a considerable service he had done me, he hastily interrupted me with ‘Madam, you are too obliging; I beg you to say nothing more upon the subject; ’tis I am the indebted person; indebted for the favour of your esteem and confidence: I wish I could merit them: to be able to give you the least satisfaction is the highest pleasure of my life. You know in what manner I have transacted these little matters; put my zeal and sincerity to a nobler test: allow me not casual but continual occasions of expressing, in a tender way, my regard to your interests, my affection to your person, which is dearer to me than all the interest upon earth.’ ‘Why now, doctor,’ says I, ‘what I have long dreaded is, I find, come to pass. I have often desired you to use more exercise, and not to sit perpetually poring upon books. The intenseness of your studies has impaired your understanding: and all I can do at present is to advise you to go directly home, and take a little something for your head. If you neglect your disorder, you will soon be subject to more violent ravings.’ ‘Madam,’ he replied, ‘I see you are disposed to make merry with my pain: I did not expect such treatment at your hands: but I heartily wish you a good night.’ The deliberation with which he spoke fully convinced me that I had lost both a lover and a friend: and the reflection on my folly filled me with shame. However, I concealed it as well as I could, and wrote in my pocket-book, under this commonplace, ‘N. B. Not to be repeated.’

It would make a history, Mr. Fitz-Adam, instead of a letter, to relate all my achievements in this way. In short, my character became in time so extraor-

dinary and formidable, that I remember to have seen but three lovers in the last seven years, and two of the three were gentlemen from Ireland.

It is owing to this timidity in the men that I trouble you with this letter, and desire its publication. They have no doubt imagined from my behaviour that I have made a vow against marriage: but whatever my intentions may be, I can assure them I have made no such vow; and if any gentleman under forty—— But I am not advertising for a husband neither; yet for fear you should think so, it is high time to take my leave by subscribing myself, sir,

Your most humble servant, A. G.

I have complied with this lady's request in publishing her letter, and shall recommend to her perusal the following song, which I received a few days ago from an unknown correspondent:

SONG.

I.

A nymph there lives, whom many a swain
Has sigh'd for oft, but sigh'd in vain,
And borne the insults and disdain
Of proud but handsome Molly.
Around her throng'd the wits and beaus;
With cringes, compliments, and bows,
And dress, and oaths, and lies, and vows,
And strove for lovely Molly.

II.

The charms that deck'd this fav'rite maid,
In verse and prose were sung or said:
(For wits will write, and beaus may read)
O happy, happy Molly!
But see triumphant beauty's pride!
In vain was wit and nonsense try'd,
Beaus, fops, nay flatterers were deny'd
By haughty, haughty Molly.

III.

Too long coquetted the vain fair :
Time, that e'en beauty scorns to spare,
Stole o'er the eyes, the cheeks, the hair,
Of silly, heedless Molly.
Paint, powder, patches, are apply'd——
No arts the sad disgrace can hide :
The fops forsake, the wits deride
Their once-loved, charming Molly.

IV.

Unheeded now at ball or play,
She hates the pretty, blames the gay——
Ah! who one tender thing will say
To poor deserted Molly?
Yet still she ling'ring haunts the scene,
Where once she acted beauty's queen,
And ev'ry simple heart had been
The slave of tyrant Molly.

V.

At length, with fruitless hope worn out,
She quits the giddy youthful rout,
And turns so monstrously devout,
No saint was e'er like Molly.
Yet while this solemn garb she wears,
Each world by turns employs her cares ;
And slander, sermons, cards, and prayers,
Divide still wretched Molly.

No. 78. THURSDAY, JUNE 27, 1754.



Inventio similium facilis erit, si quis sibi omnes res animatas et inanimatas ————— frequenter ante oculos potest ponere; et ex his aliquam venari similitudinem, quæ aut ornare, aut docere, aut apertiore rem facere possit. CICERO.

TO MR. FITZ-ADAM.

SIR,

I AM of opinion that a very pleasing method of instruction might be drawn from the affinity which the more liberal arts and sciences have to manners and behaviour. The following precepts, which are equally calculated to direct the young painter's hand, and the young lady's conduct, contain an imperfect specimen of the method I am proposing; and which I am induced to communicate to Mr. Fitz-Adam, because I am assured that fine arts, good manners, and the fair sex, are, and ought to be, the principal care of the World.

It is impossible to arrive at any eminent degree of excellence either in painting or behaviour, without a long course of discipline in the school of imitation. The character of a valuable original can never be procured without condescending first of all to the humble employment of the copyist. The *carte blanche* of a youthful mind will be as imperfectly adorned by the first rudiments of politeness, as a scholar's lesson-book by the first principles of design: but care and practice may soon correct the awkwardness of a first attempt; and it may be the pupil's fault, if every new day, as well as every new leaf, does not produce some proof of amendment. But however similar the mind and hand may be with regard to their advances

towards perfection, yet it is to be observed that the accomplishments of the one are much more requisite and important than those of the other, and that an irregular action is not so easily reformed as a negligent stroke.

To resolve the whole of beauty into a fine complexion, a just symmetry of shape, and a nice regularity of features, is altogether as absurd as it would be to reduce all the qualifications for good painting to a manual skill of mixing colours for the pallet, and sketching out the contours of single portraits. There must be a certain gracefulness and uniformity in every part of a lady's character to make her appear amiable to a man of discernment; just as a consistent design and a proper combination of figures in a history-piece can alone recommend the painter to a critical observer.

The extravagances of the prude and coquette are analogous to a timid exactness and a dissolute licentiousness of style in painting. A degree of freedom, far beyond a cheerful affability, shall, in some ladies be attended with many a striking charm, and affect one, like Paulo's daring stroke, with warmer and more animated sentiments, than could have been excited by the cold and spiritless efforts of a deliberate regularity. There are others, in whom a delicate reserve, bordering almost on the confines of a prudish shyness, shall appear extremely engaging to men of a nicer turn, and easily captivate all such fancies as are delighted with the chastised refinement of a Corregio's pencil. Nor do we want a third sort of ladies, who are endowed with an admirable talent for gaining themselves admirers by an odd affectation of capricious levities, and a whimsical singularity of carriage: I know several who can give as happy proofs of their expertness in this fantastic art as ever Le Piper could of his excellence for grotesque representa-

tions, and who are qualified to trifle with as much success as that artist has been known to do with a piece of charcoal upon a wall. But it is to be observed that these are privileges only suited to peculiar characters, and can never produce any good effect, unless they derive their power from some inbred gift, and flow directly from the genuine source of nature.

There may be as great a variety in the modes of right behaviour, as in the styles of good painting. Many pictures may be worthy of admiration besides those of the most celebrated masters; and many a lady may deserve to be classed amongst the lovely, the polite, and accomplished, though she be not a perfect Lady ***. It is not requisite for us to show a general disregard to the examples of others, in order to be distinguished for something peculiar to ourselves: all we are to be cautioned against is, a ridiculous imitation of such as are either inconsistent with our genius, or above the reach of our capacities.

The propriety of attitude and drapery depends so much on characters, circumstances, and designs, that they cannot well be reduced to any fixed and determinate regulations. There is no one, I believe, but will readily allow that the airs and movements of an Italian dancer on the theatre must appear almost as unbecoming in an English lady dancing at a ball, as the picture of a Venus in the antic posture of a Mercury. Yet there can be no more danger in a lady's making too free a use of her limbs, while she keeps clear of all hoydening and affected gestures, than there is of a painter's having too great a knowledge of anatomy, so long as it is only made a secret guide to him in his designs. Nor can either be remarkably faulty in point of drapery, provided they do but pay a due regard to shape, quality, and custom.

There is so strict an agreement between the disclosing art in dress, and the carnation art in painting,

that I believe it would be difficult to find out a fault or excellence in the one, that could not be paralleled with some corresponding beauty or defect in the other.

There is no *woman* where there's no *reserve*,
And 'tis on *plenty* your poor lovers *starve*,

says the witty and ingenious Dr. Young: and it is very well known by all good critics and proficient in painting, that an uncommon share of skill and judgment is requisite for the production of every part of the naked. Nor is it hard to assign a reason why it should be so; for if it be not extremely delicate in texture and complexion, it will of course appear disgusting; and if it be not extremely modest in posture and design, it must needs be thought indecent: whereas the most imperfect concealment, a covering even thinner than the thinnest gauze, will not only be sufficient to relieve the offended eye, but will likewise enable the fancy to improve into beauty every thing it hides. As the propriety of dress is so much more dependent on fashion than nature, I am cautious of affirming that a woman ought alway to be mistress of a pretty face, before she has the confidence to appear in public with a bare bosom. But allowing that, under the sanction of fashion, she may display so distinguishing a characteristic of her sex, without danger of incurring an immodest reputation; yet she cannot possibly do it without forfeiting all pretensions to discretion: for as she cannot be ignorant how the beauty of a new gown decreases with the frequency of its appearance, she ought always to know how little value the men place in a privilege of surveying ever so pretty an object in itself, if it be constantly exposed to the familiar gaze of the multitude. It is not natural for us to regard any thing that is held too apparently cheap in the estimation of the pro-

prietor: and I am well satisfied that a lady cannot take a worse method of gaining particular admirers, than by making general treats. If your fair readers, Mr. Fitz-Adam, will take my word for it, I can assure them that the men are ten times more affected with an accidental momentary glance, than with a designed exposure for a whole hour together.

Upon the whole; as Mr. Pope has shown us that he could collect hints enough for the composition of an ingenious treatise, even from one single fragment in the literary lining of a band-box; and as Leonardo da Vinci has observed that the spots on an old mouldy wall, forming a confused resemblance of different objects, may be sufficient to supply an improving fancy with a fine assemblage of the most perfect images; so it is to be hoped that the World may, in the same manner, be able to collect a great deal of instruction from these random and undigested reflections of its

sincere admirer, and most humble servant,

PHILOCOSMOS.

P. S. It may not be improper to tell you, that I have been some time engaged in drawing up a system of rules for the ladies' dress, in order to determine how far personal beauty, as the work of nature, is capable of being improved by the assistance of art. In these rules I shall endeavour to fix the proper standards of decorum, and to circumscribe the authority of fashion within the reasonable limitations of modesty and discretion: and as this attempt is principally calculated to reform the present nakedness of the ladies, I intend to publish it under the title of *Canons for the Toilet*.

No. 79. THURSDAY, JULY 4, 1754.



TO MR. FITZ-ADAM.

SIR,

You cannot do a greater service to the world than by promoting the real happiness of the best part of it, the fair sex; for whose sake I beg you will publish the following animadversions upon an error in education, which the good sense of the present age, with all its attachments to nature, has not totally eradicated. The error I mean is putting *romances* into the hands of young ladies; which being a sort of writing that abounds in characters nowhere to be found can at best be but a useless employment, even supposing the readers of them to have neither relish nor understanding for superior concerns. But as this is by no means the case, and as the happiness of mankind is deeply interested in the sentiments and conduct of the ladies, why do we contribute to the filling their heads with fancies, which render them incapable either of enjoying or communicating that happiness? Why do we suffer those hearts, which ought to be appropriated to the various affections of social life, to be alienated by the mere creatures of the imagination? In short, why do we suffer those who were born for the purpose of living in society with men endued with passions and frailties like their own to be bred up in daily expectation of living *out* of it with such men as never have existed? Believe me, Mr. Fitz-Adam (much as the age of nature as this is thought to be), I know several unmarried ladies, who in all probability had been long ago good wives and good mothers, if their imaginations had not been

early perverted with the chimerical ideas of romantic love, and themselves cheated out of the charities (as Milton calls them) and all the real blessings of those relations, by the hopes of that ideal happiness, which is nowhere to be found but in romances.

It is a principle with such ladies, that it matters not if the qualities they ascribe to the heroes of these books be real or imaginary: upon which principle, a footman may as well be the hero as his master; for nothing, it seems, is necessary to dub him such, but the magic power of a lady's fancy, which creates chimeras much faster than nature can produce realities.

Surely, Mr. Fitz-Adam, this doctrine of ideal happiness is calculated for the meridian of Bedlam, and ought never to be received beyond the limits of Moorfields. For if we should admit that the monarch in his cell is as happy as the monarch on his throne, while both their objects are ambition; yet the happiness of society must depend only on the reasonableness of individuals. A father is by this pernicious doctrine frequently robbed of the comfort he expected in his child; a daughter is deprived of the protection and support she might otherwise have claimed from her father; and society is interrupted in forming its general system of happiness, which those relations should contribute to establish.

These, Mr. Fitz-Adam, are almost the necessary consequences of reading romances: and as human nature is apt to be more influenced by example than precept, I shall beg leave to enforce the truth of what I have advanced by the following history.

Clarinda was the only child of a wealthy merchant, who placed all his happiness in the expectations of her merit, and the rewards of it. Nature had encouraged him in that expectation, by giving her a very liberal portion of her favours; and he determined to improve it by every means which the fond-

ness of a parent could suggest to him. But, unfortunately for Clarinda, her father's good intentions were not guided by a judgment equally good: for it happened to her, as it too often does in the education of young women, that his endeavours were rather directed to grace her person than to adorn her mind: and whatever qualifications he might wish the latter to possess, he seemed solicitous only of such as might recommend the former. Dress, dancing, and music, were the whole of her accomplishments: and they so immoderately softened the natural effeminacy of her mind, that she contracted an aversion to every kind of reading which did not represent the same softness of manners. Every hour which was not appropriated to one of these accomplishments was spent in the ensnaring practice of reading novels and romances; of which *Clelia* was her favourite, and the hero of it continually in her head.

Whilst Clarinda was thus accomplishing herself, the father was studying to reward the merits of his daughter with a husband suitable to her rank and fortune. Nor was he unsuccessful in his care: for Theodore, the son of a neighbouring gentleman in the country, was chosen for this honour. But though all who knew him declared him to be worthy of it, unhappily for Clarinda, she alone thought otherwise. For notwithstanding he loved her with a sincerity hardly to be equalled, yet as he did not approach her in heroics, nor first break his passion to her in shady groves, he was not the hero she expected: he neither bowed gracefully, moved majestically, nor sighed pathetically enough to charm a heart which doted on romantic grimace: in short, he was not the hero which *Clelia* had impressed on Clarinda's imagination. But, what was still more unfortunate, Theodore's valet de chambre was completely so. That happy hero was a Frenchman, who to an imagination

little less romantic than Clarinda's, had added all the fantastic levity of his country; which happening first to discover itself in those very shades where she used to meditate on the hero of *Clelia*, so captivated her heart with Monsieur Antoine the valet, that her imagination instantly annihilated every circumstance of his rank and fortune, and added every enchanting accomplishment to his mind and person.

There is no resisting the impetuosity of romantic love. Like enthusiasm, it breaks through all the restraints of nature and custom, and enables, as well as animates its votaries, to execute all its extravagant suggestions. A passion of this sublime original could have none of those difficulties in discovering itself to its subject, which are apt to oppose the rash wills of vulgar mortals; and therefore it was not long before Clarinda gave Antonio (for so she chose to soften the unharmonious name of Antoine) to understand that love, like death, levelled all distinctions of birth and fortune, and introduced the lowest and highest into Elysium together.

Antonio, who had been almost as conversant with romances as Clarinda, received the first intimations of the lady's passion for him with a transport that had less surprise than joy in it; and from the first discovery of it, there arose an intercourse between them, which entirely defeated the pretensions of Theodore, and confirmed Clarinda's passion for his valet.

But as much a hero as Antonio appeared to be both to Clarinda and himself, during the first part of this tender intercourse, in the progress of it he discovered that he wanted one principal ingredient in the composition of that ideal character: he had not courage enough to be a martyr. For though he doted on Clarinda's person whilst her fortune was annexed to it, yet he could not bring himself to

starve with an angel : and this he soon perceived must be his fate, if he possessed the one without the other. Such a disappointment from a Hero to a Dido, or to any woman who expected a natural gratification of her passion, would have excited resentment and aversion. This would have been nature, which romantic love has no knowledge of: it never changes any of those ideas with which it first captivates a fantastic heart: therefore Clarinda, though she most pathetically lamented her disappointment in Antonio, yet charged it all upon her stars, and accused only them and the gods of cruelty. Her father at the same time declared his resolution to disinherit her, if she persisted in her folly: and the more effectually to prevent it, he bribed Antonio to leave England; which so inflamed Clarinda's passion (who considered him as banished on her account) that she made a solemn vow never to marry any other man.

To conclude; the consequence of this vow was, that the father settled an annuity on his daughter, and entailed his estate on his next kindred. This annuity she still lives to enjoy; and in the fifty-fifth year of her age prefers the visionary happiness of reading *Clelia* and thinking on her Antonio, to the real blessings of those social relations, which in all probability she had enjoyed through life, if she had never been a reader of romances.

I am, &c.

No. 80. THURSDAY, JULY 11, 1754.

TO MR. FITZ-ADAM.

SIR,

FROM the indulgence you have so often shown to the productions of female correspondents, I am encouraged to hope that you will not refuse this epistle a place in your paper.

You must know, sir, that with a tolerable person, a very good fortune, and lovers in abundance, I have a particular humour to live and die a maid. This way of thinking, I protest, does not arise from disappointed love, but, on the contrary, from my never having seen any one man who has been possessed of those accomplishments which I think necessary for a husband.

You will imagine, perhaps, that I hardly know myself what sort of a man I would have ; but to convince you of the contrary, I am going to give you a description of one, whom, notwithstanding my present humour, I would willingly marry, and reward with a fortune of ten thousand pounds. Such a declaration as this, while there are so many fortune-hunters, witty sparks, pretty fellows, and grave widowers about town, will undoubtedly strike some hundreds with a flattering hope that I am easily to be carried off ; but to silence their pretensions all at once, here follows the description of the only man in the world that I will consent to marry ; and whom I shall beg leave to entitle

THE MAID'S HUSBAND.

Notwithstanding it is a fatal maxim among women, ' To please the eye, though they torment the heart,' yet I am so far an advocate for pleasing the

eye, that the man I have an idea of must have a person graceful and engaging. The features of his face must be regular; and though regular, agreeable; which as yet I hardly remember to have seen, having generally observed that where nature is most exact, she is least engaging. His eyes must be lively, sparkling, and affecting; and over the whole face there must be a clear complexion, health, cheerfulness, and sensibility. His stature must be inclining to the tall; his motion easy and genteel; free from the short pert trip of the affected beau, or the haughty tragic step of the more solemn fop. His behaviour serious, but natural; neither too open nor too reserved. His look, his laugh, his speech, and his whole manner, must be just without affectation, and free without levity.

Thus much for his person. I now come to the endowments of his mind; without which, grace, beauty, and agreeableness will avail him nothing. His genius must be fanciful; his knowledge extensive. Men, as well as books, must have been his study. Learning, freedom, and gallantry, must be so blended in him, as to make him always the improving friend, the gay companion, and the entertaining lover. In conversation he must say nothing with study, nor yet any thing at random. His thoughts must flow from him naturally, yet not without that delicacy of expression, which is necessary to give them a genteel turn. To the talents of his mind let me add (if I may be allowed the distinction) the qualities of his soul. He must be generous without prodigality; humane without weakness; just without severity; and fond without folly. To his wife he must be endearing; to his children affectionate; to his friends warm; and to mankind benevolent. Nature and reason must join their powers, and to the openness of the heart add the virtue of economy; making him careful without

avarice, and giving him a kind of unconcernedness without negligence. With love he must have respect; and by a continued compliance always win upon the inclination. He must take care to retain his conquest by the means he gained it, and eternally look and speak with the same desires and affections, though with greater freedom.

It has been observed by experienced people, that the soul contracts a sort of blindness by loving; but the man I am speaking of must derive his sentiments from reason; and the passion, which in others is looked on as the mark of folly, be in him the true effect of judgment.

To these qualities I must add that charm which is to be considered before all the rest, though hard to be met with in this libertine age, religion. He must be devout without superstition, and pious without melancholy: far from that infirmity which makes men uncharitable bigots, infusing into their hearts a morose contempt of the world, and an antipathy to the pleasures of it. He must not be such a lover of society as to mix with the assemblies of knaves and blockheads, nor yet of an opinion that he ought to retire from mankind to seek God in the horror of solitude: on the contrary, he must think that the Almighty is to be found amongst men, where his goodness is most active, and his providence most employed. There it is that religion must enlighten, and reason regulate his conduct, both in the cares of salvation, and the duties of life.

With such a man, a woman must enjoy those pleasures in marriage which none but fools would ridicule. Her husband would be always the same, and always pleasing. Other wives are glad if they can now and then find with their husbands one agreeable hour; but with this a disagreeable minute would be impossible. On whatever occasions we

should see or speak to each other, it must be with mutual pleasure, and assured satisfaction.

Now, Mr. Fitz-Adam, let your dressing, scribbling, handsome young fellows, whether of the Temple, of the university, of the army, or of the city, who would be glad of a woman of five-and-twenty, not disagreeable in her person, and with ten thousand pounds in her pocket, read this character; and if any one of them will assert and prove it to belong to himself, my heart, hand, and fortune are entirely at his service. But I believe, sir, that instead of a man, I have been describing a monster of the imagination; a thing that neither is, was, nor ever will be. I am therefore resigned to my condition, and can think without repining of dying a maid (and I hope an old one) since I am not to expect a husband to the wishes of,

Sir,

Your humble servant,
reader, and correspondent,

A. B.

Though I doubt not but my fair correspondent is thoroughly deserving of the husband she knows so well how to describe, yet I could have wished, for her own sake, as well as for the sake of some happy man, that she had added a qualifying postscript to her letter, signifying that she was willing to make some little abatement in her demands. When gentlemen build houses, it is usual with them either to give up conveniency for a prospect, or prospect for conveniency. In this manner should a lady act in the choice of a husband; if she sets her heart upon a face, she should have no dislike to a coxcomb; or if she falls in love with a mind, a sloven should appear charming: for the odds are against her, that the

handsome man is the one, and the man of knowledge the other.

Exclusive of myself, I know of no such character as the lady has described: nor dare I say a word of my own person and accomplishments, being unfortunately near seventy, and a married man. It has also been hinted to me (for I scorn to deceive any body) that I have a small stoop in my gait, and that I am not quite so well bred upon all occasions as a young lady might expect me to be.

I am also cautious of recommending any of those gentlemen who are daily advertising for wives in the public papers: for whether it be owing to their extreme modesty, or whether they have really no other accomplishments than they usually set forth to the world, their descriptions of themselves amount to no more than 'that they are tall, well made, and very agreeable; that they have healthy constitutions, have had liberal educations, and are of sober morals.' But as these descriptions are by no means particular enough, I cannot be certain that the publishers of them will answer exactly the idea of the *maid's husband*. Besides, I have lately received letters from particular ladies, who, either as principals or friends, have examined these gentlemen, which letters assure me that they do not at all come up to the idea given of themselves, even in their own modest advertisements.

But before I take leave of my ingenious correspondent, I promise her to give notice in this paper of the first maid's husband that falls within my knowledge; and if she pleases to signify where and when she will be waited on by any such gentlemen, her commands shall be executed with the nicest punctuality. Or (as it is very considerably expressed in an advertisement now before me) *if the lady does*

not choose to appear personally for the first time, may send any other proper lady of her acquaintance to the place appointed.

No. 81. THURSDAY, JULY 18, 1754.

THE following letters need no apology. With regard to the first, it may be proper to observe, that the complaint contained in it is a very just one: of the second I shall say nothing till I have given it to my readers.

TO MR. FITZ-ADAM.

SIR,

I can assure you with great truth, that you are the first man I ever wrote a letter to, or wished to correspond with, except my father and my brother. I am the youngest of three sisters, am not quite twenty-one, love dress, and love fashions, but cannot consent to appear in the public walks like a woman of the town. I am sorry to say it, but it is really my opinion, that if the common prostitutes were to walk in the Park with no other covering than a shift of Paris net, half the young ladies of my acquaintance would come into the fashion.

My two sisters may take it as they please, but they are so far gone into the mode, that I hardly ever go abroad with them that we are not addressed by gentlemen who are utter strangers to us, in the most familiar (and sometimes the most indecent) terms imaginable. No longer ago than last week we were mobbed in Spring-gardens, from my eldest sister's having affronted a couple of gentlemen, who

would fain have entertained us with a glass of wine at the Cardigan. For my own part, I tell them both very frankly, that while they endeavour to look like women of the town, it is a great mistake in them to be above their business.

Pray, Mr. Fitz-Adam, favour us with a World upon this subject; for, as the youngest sister, my opinion goes for nothing; and besides, I want to have them mortified a little; for they neither love nor esteem me, because I am said to be handsomer than they, and am better received by all our relations and acquaintance.

I am, sir,
Your humble servant,
SARAH MEANWELL.

SIR,

I am a very good-hearted honest girl; but from my situation in life, I am afraid people think me otherwise. It is my unhappiness that from too high a birth, and too low a fortune, I am obliged to live constantly with the great; and to tell you the truth, I am really handsomer than most of the women I mix with. From this circumstance I am looked upon with envy by many of my acquaintance; but indeed, sir, when you know my heart, you will rather think me an object of pity.

Though I have the best spirits in the world, and am as gay as innocence will suffer me to be, I am called a queer creature by the men, and a prude by the women. And all this for what? Truly, because I have more modesty than the company I keep. And yet so prevailing is example, and so necessary to a dependent state are good humour and compliance, that I have not been able at all times to be quite as modest as I should be. I do not mean that I have been downright wicked, or that I ever wished

to be so ; but if my grandmother was to rise from the grave, and to be witness to the *sentiments* I have drank, and the romps I have played, she would certainly box my ears, and call me by a name too coarse for me to mention.

If you are an old man, Mr. Fitz-Adam, you will hardly understand me ; and as I am a young woman, I dare not come to a particular explanation. But if you will be so kind as to convince the people of fashion that decency is a virtue, it would save me from many a rent in my clothes, and make my evenings at home, as well as my parties abroad, much pleasanter to me.

I think I may be allowed to speak a little plainer. The privilege of high birth is to do every thing you have a mind to do. It is a maxim with men to attempt every thing, and with the women to refuse but one thing. The attacks that are made upon a lady's honour are considered only as compliments to her beauty ; and she is the most flattered, who is oftenest insulted. Your correspondent, Mrs. Shuffle, never said a truer thing in her life, than that ' cards were an asylum against the dangers of men : ' and I really grow fond of routs and drums, because their designs, at such parties, are only against my purse.

But if women in the most elevated situations, either from their own levity, or the impudence of men, are liable to these fashionable attacks, how must it fare with a poor girl, who has no fortune to awe these libertines into respect, and no example among her companions to authorize her resentment ? They construe my very complaints into design—' The prude would take us in, would she ? She had better be one of us, or egad we'll blow her. '—This, with a little plainer swearing, and coarser threatening, has been said of me in my own hearing.

What shall I do, Mr. Fitz-Adam, to live comfort-

ably, and preserve my reputation? My fortune, which is no more than two thousand pounds, is hardly sufficient to maintain me even in the country; and I see nothing but ruin before me, if I continue where I am. I have always considered the marriage state as a woman's surest happiness; and I verily believe I have every qualification, except money, to make it easy to him who chose me. But unless I transport myself to the East or West Indies for a husband, I have no hopes of one. I neither expect nor desire a man of fashion; for a clergyman I am too poor; a country squire would beat me, and an honest tradesman, who knew my education, might imagine I should beat him. Neither of these would be my choice; but if you know of any private gentleman, who has seen enough of the world to despise the follies of it; one who could support me decently, and think himself rewarded by love and gratitude; who could share with me in domestic pleasure, or lend me his arm for a visit to a friend; who at his leisure hours would be pleased with my prattle, and with a look of delight could tell me that he was happy;—if you know of such a man, you may honestly assure him, that though I have lived all my life among the great, I am as clean in my person, and as modest in my inclinations, as if I had never seen good company. You may also add, and with equal truth, that excepting a hobble in my gait, and a small propensity to talk loud in public, I have not the least tincture of quality about me.

I am, sir,

Your most humble servant,

M. A.

The true spirit of irony which so plainly appears in this letter must no doubt be highly pleasing to the polite part of my readers. But as there are many dull people in the world, who have no con-

ceptions beyond the literal meaning of what they read, I shall subjoin a few remarks of my own, to prevent the aforesaid dull people from mistaking a very fine panegyric for an insolent libel against the chastest and most valuable part of mankind.*

This young lady seems to have formed her plan upon the inimitable Dr. Swift, who of all men that wrote understood irony the best; and who had the happiest art of conveying compliment under the disguise of abuse. Her whole epistle is irony; which (as my sagacious friend Mr. Nathan Bayley, in his etymological dictionary, defines it) is a figure in rhetoric, by which we speak contrary to what we think. We are therefore to understand by the above letter, that the nicest decorum and the most exemplary chastity are the distinguishing characteristics of our young men of fashion: that they live in a constant practice of all the virtues; and are the shining examples of temperance, modesty, and true politeness. By the *sentiments* which are given by the ladies over a glass of wine, my correspondent very genteelly hints, that young women of condition are the only persons in the world who can be merry and wise: that the bottle, which is too apt to intoxicate the vulgar, can inspire these ladies with the most refined ideas of men and things; which ideas are poured forth in sentiments, that Plato, Socrates, and all the sages of antiquity never thought of.

I shall only add, that the notions which mean and ignorant women commonly conceive of matrimony are finely ridiculed in this letter. The writer very humorously supposes, that the domestic endearments of private life are more eligible than the separate beds and separate pleasures of people of condition; and with an archness peculiar to herself, prefers the

husband who can be the companion of his wife; to the man of rank, who is the companion of all other women.

No. 82. THURSDAY, JULY 25, 1754.

TO MR. FITZ-ADAM.

SIR,

IT is a received opinion among the politicians, that the spirit of liberty can never be too active under a constitution like ours. But though no lover of his country would desire to weaken this principle, which has more than once preserved the nation, yet he may lament the unfortunate application of it, when perverted to countenance party violence, and opposition to the most innocent measures of the legislature. The clamour against the alteration of the style seemed to be one of these instances. The alarm was given, and the most fatal consequences to our religion and government were immediately apprehended from it. This opinion gathered strength in its course, and received a tincture from the remains of superstition still prevailing in the counties most remote from town. I know several worthy gentlemen in the west, who lived many months under a daily apprehension of some dreadful visitation from pestilence or famine. The vulgar were almost every where persuaded that nature gave evident tokens of her disapproving these innovations. I do not indeed recollect that any blazing stars were seen to appear upon this occasion, or that armies were observed to be encountering in the skies: people probably concluding that the great men who pretended to control

the sun in his course would assume equal authority over the inferior constellations, and not suffer any aërial militia to assemble themselves in opposition to ministerial proceedings.

The objection to this regulation, as favouring a custom established among papists, was not heard indeed with the same regard as formerly, when it actually prevented the legislature from passing a bill of the same nature; yet many a president of a corporation club very eloquently harangued upon it, as introductory to the doctrine of transubstantiation, making no doubt that fires would be kindled again at Smithfield before the conclusion of the year. This popular clamour has at last happily subsided, and shared the general fate of those opinions which derive their support from imagination.

In the present happy disposition of the nation, the author of the following verses may venture to introduce the complaints of an ideal personage, without seeming to strengthen the faction of real parties, without forfeiting his reputation as a good citizen, or bringing a scandal on the political character of Mr. Fitz-Adam, by making him the publisher of a libel against the state. This ideal personage is no other than the Old May-Day, the only apparent sufferer from the present regulation. Her situation is indeed a little mortifying, as every elderly lady will readily allow; since the train of her admirers is withdrawn from her at once, and their adoration transferred to a rival, younger than herself by at least eleven days.

I am, sir,

Your most humble servant,

E. L.

THE TEARS OF OLD MAY-DAY.

Led by the jocund train of vernal hours
And vernal airs, uprose the gentle May ;
Blushing she rose, and blushing rose the flowers
That sprung spontaneous in her genial ray.

Her locks with heaven's ambrosial dews were bright,
And am'rous Zephyrs flutter'd on her breast :
With every shifting gleam of morning light
The colours shifted of her rainbow vest.

Imperial ensigns graced her smiling form,
A golden key and golden wand she bore :
This charms to peace each sullen eastern storm,
And that unlocks the summer's copious store.

Onward in conscious majesty she came,
The grateful honours of mankind to taste :
To gather fairest wreaths of future fame,
And blend fresh triumphs with her glories past.

Vain hope ! No more in choral bands unite
Her virgin vot'ries, and at early dawn,
Sacred to May and Love's mysterious rite,
Brush the light dew-drops * from the spangled lawn.

To her no more Augusta's wealthy pride †
Pours the full tribute from Potosi's mine :
Nor fresh-blown garlands village maids provide,
A purer off'ring at her rustic shrine.

* Alluding to the country custom of gathering May-dew.

† The plate garlands of London.

No more the Maypole's verdant height around
To valour's games th' ambitious youth advance ;
No merry bells and tabors' sprightlier sound
Wake the loud carol, and the sportive dance.

Sudden in pensive sadness droop'd her head,
Faint on her cheeks the blushing crimson died.—
' O ! chaste victorious triumphs, whither fled ?
My maiden honours, whither gone ?' she cried.

' Ah ! once to fame and bright dominion born,
The earth and smiling ocean saw me rise,
With time coeval and the star of morn,
The first, the fairest daughter of the skies.

Then, when at Heaven's prolific mandate sprung
The radiant beam of new-created day,
Celestial harps, to airs of triumph strung,
Hail'd the glad dawn, and angels call'd me May.

Space in her empty regions heard the sound,
And hills, and dales, and rocks, and valleys rung ;
The sun exulted in his glorious round,
And shouting planets in their courses sung.

For ever then I led the constant year ;
Saw Youth, and Joy, and Love's enchanting wiles ;
Saw the mild Graces in my train appear,
And infant Beauty brighten in my smiles.

No winter frown'd. In sweet embrace allied,
Three sister seasons danced th' eternal green ;
And Spring's retiring softness gently vied
With Autumn's blush, and Summer's lofty mien.

Too soon, when man profaned the blessings given,
And Vengeance arm'd to blot a guilty age,
With bright Astrea to my native heaven
I fled, and flying saw the Deluge rage :

Saw bursting clouds eclipse the noontide beams,
While sounding billows from the mountains roll'd,
With bitter waves polluting all my streams,
My nectar'd streams, that flow'd on sands of gold.

Then vanish'd many a sea-girt isle and grove,
Their forests floating on the wat'ry plain :
Then famed for arts and laws derived from Jove,
My Atalantis * sunk beneath the main.

No longer bloom'd primeval Eden's bowers,
Nor guardian dragons watch'd th' Hesperian steep :
With all their fountains, fragrant fruits and flowers
Torn from the continent to glut the deep.

No more to dwell in sylvan scenes I deign'd,
Yet oft descending to the languid earth,
With quick'ning powers the fainting mass sustain'd,
And waked her slumbering atoms into birth.

And every echo taught my raptured name,
And every virgin breathed her am'rous vows,
And previous wreaths of rich immortal fame,
Shower'd by the Muses, crown'd my lofty brows.

But chief in Europe, and in Europe's pride,
My Albion's favour'd realms, I rose adored ;
And pour'd my wealth, to other climes denied,
From Amalthea's horn with plenty stored.

* See Plato.

Ah me ! for now a younger rival claims
 My ravish'd honours, and to her belong
 My choral dances, and victorious games,
 To her my garlands and triumphal song.

O say what yet untasted beauties flow,
 What purer joys await her gentler reign ?
 Do lilies fairer, violets sweeter blow ?
 And warbles Philomel a softer strain ?

Do morning suns in ruddier glory rise ?
 Does evening fan her with serener gales ?
 Do clouds drop fatness from the wealthier skies,
 Or wantons plenty in her happier vales ?

Ah ! no ; the blunted beams of dawning light
 Skirt the pale orient with uncertain day ;
 And Cynthia, riding on the car of night,
 Through clouds embattled faintly wings her way.

Pale, immature, the blighted verdure springs,
 Nor mounting juices feed the swelling flower ;
 Mute all the groves, nor Philomela sings
 When Silence listens at the midnight hour.

Nor wonder, man, that nature's bashful face,
 And op'ning charms her rude embraces fear :
 Is she not sprung from April's wayward race,
 The sickly daughter of th' unripen'd year ?

With showers and sunshine in her fickle eyes,
 With hollow smiles proclaiming treach'rous peace ;
 With blushes, harb'ring, in their thin disguise,
 The blasts that riot on the Spring's increase ?

Is this the fair invested with my spoil
 By Europe's laws, and Senates' stern command?
 Ungen'rous Europe! let me fly thy soil,
 And waft my treasures to a grateful land:

Again revive, on Asia's drooping shore,
 My Daphne's groves, or Lycia's ancient plain;
 Again to Afric's sultry sands restore
 Embow'ring shades, and Libyan Ammon's fane:

Or haste to northern Zembla's savage coast,
 There hush to silence elemental strife;
 Brood o'er the regions of eternal frost,
 And swell her barren womb with heat and life.

Then Britain'—Here she ceased. Indignant grief,
 And parting pangs her falt'ring tongue suppress:
 Veil'd in an amber cloud, she sought relief,
 And tears, and silent anguish, told the rest.

No. 83. THURSDAY, AUGUST 1, 1754.

TO MR. FITZ-ADAM.

SIR,

WHEN the studies of the learned and philosophical men are employed in extending the commerce and improving the manufactures of their country, they cannot be held in too high a degree of estimation by a trading people.

The perfection at which our home manufactures are arrived we impute in a great measure to the ingenuity of our ordinary handicrafts, to the industry of our merchants, and to the honesty and integrity

of our trading companies. But in my humble opinion, if our natural philosophers had not kindly stepped in to the assistance of the said handicrafts and others, our manufactures would scarcely have been carried to so great a degree of excellence above those of the ancient as well as of the modern world. For by as much as we are before all other countries in the knowledge of natural philosophy, by just so much are all other countries behind us in the goodness of their manufactures.

It is by the head of the philosopher that the hand of the mechanic is put in motion: and though the ancients and a few nations of the moderns may have produced some good hands, yet their having made so mean a figure in trade must be owing to their want of philosophical heads.

The manufacture of glass-porcelain and cephalic snuff were absolutely unknown to the ancients; and they had very little knowledge in the making thunder and lightning, which our own countrymen, from the sagacity of our philosophers, and the help of electrical experiments, are now able to make in very considerable quantities, to the great honour and emolument of these kingdoms.

I am not afraid of asserting, that from this manufacture alone (provided it were under proper regulations, and honoured with a parliamentary encouragement) we might have it in our power to be the most potent, the most wealthy, and the happiest people in the whole universe. It would enable us to pay off our national debt in six months: it would secure us from our enemies without the expense either of fleet or army: or we might conquer France, whenever the common people of England shall order it to be done, without the assistance of allies, or paying one penny to the land-tax. These, Mr. Fitz-Adam, I think, are considerations which deserve the attention of the

public ; at least, they are considerations which have induced me to be very particular in my thoughts upon this valuable commodity.

When electrical experiments were first exhibited to the curious, I did not hear that the professors proposed any advantages to mankind, except that with the help of their curious engine, they could give a patient a pretty smart blow on the elbow, without the use of any other weapon. It is true that a small crab-stick might have performed the operation ; but then it would have been effected by a method common and vulgar. We were informed, indeed, that the electrical engine had been made use of in the cure of several distempers ; but I do not recollect to have heard that they had any great success in that way, except that some very few mean people were made blind, that three or four necks were dislocated, and that a child of five years old was frightened into fits. But these cases not being sufficiently attested, and the same sort of cures having been tolerably well performed by many regular-bred surgeons and apothecaries in this town, I was glad to learn that our philosophers had confined all their experiments to the manufacture above-mentioned ; the process of which is so clear and easy, (all the ingredients being to be found in our own country, and none of them liable to any duty) that I make no doubt of our being able to bring thunder and lightning to market at a much cheaper price than common gunpowder.

I am informed by a friend, who for these last five years has applied himself wholly to electrical experiments, that the most effectual and easy method of making this commodity is, by grinding a certain quantity of air between a glass ball and a bag of sand ; and when you have ground it into fire, your lightning is made ; and then you may either bottle it up, or put it into casks, properly seasoned for that

purpose, and send it to market. My friend very honestly confesses, that what he has hitherto made is not of a sufficient degree of strength to answer all the purposes of natural lightning; but he assures me that he shall very soon be able to effect it, and that he has already brought it to a very surprising degree of perfection, insomuch that, in the presence of several of his neighbours, he has produced a clap of thunder which blew out a candle, accompanied with a flash of lightning which made an impression on a pat of butter as it stood upon the table. He also assures me that in warm weather he can shake all the pewter upon his shelf, and that he expects, when his thermometer is at sixty-two degrees and a half, he shall be able to sour all the small-beer in his cellar, and break his largest pier-glass. If he accomplishes the two last, he flatters himself that it will be strong enough to kill a young child; but he is obliged to defer that experiment till his lady is brought to bed.

If these facts are true, which I do not in the least doubt, we may soon see this manufacture in a very flourishing condition. For if from a glass ball of one foot and a half diameter, which is the size of my friend's, we can produce a sufficient quantity of lightning to destroy a child, it follows that a ball of four times that diameter will kill a man in perfect health and vigour; which must be a great advantage to the public, and save a considerable sum of money which is yearly given to apothecaries and doctors. And if the wheel, thus increased in its diameter, increases the power; by increasing it still farther you will make lightning enough to split a church steeple.

As for example. Suppose A, fig. the 1st, to be a glass ball 4672 feet diameter, turned upon the spindle B, being in length 5792 feet, by the handle C, against the sand-bag a a a a, which suppose to be

fixed to the side of Richmond-hill. The quantity of air ground in an hour will be equal to XX, which will produce of pure lightning, 1,694,753 tons; the force of which being applied to St. Bride's steeple, will make the crack GH, in fig. the 2d. If this should not be intelligible to those who are unacquainted with the mathematics, I will at any time at a day's notice attend and explain it to them.

I can think of but one objection to the erecting the machine above described, which is the greatness of the expense, as being too heavy for any private person. But it is to be hoped that some public company will undertake it, or that our governors will favour it with their consideration, and order it to be erected at the public expense. I, who have only the good of my country before me, will most readily agree to inspect the workmen, and see that the money shall be laid out with the strictest economy, without desiring a shilling for my trouble.

But lest some malicious persons should suggest that I am writing merely to recommend a job to myself, I solemnly declare, that full a week before I had any thoughts of addressing the public by means of your paper, I applied myself to a club of Anti-Gallians, of which I have the honour to be an unworthy member, and proposed in a speech that our laudable society should take this infant manufacture into their guardianship and protection. And as we have lately discovered that nothing excites mankind to good and virtuous actions so much as honourable and pecuniary gratuities, it was unanimously agreed that the society should order premiums to be given out of their public stock, for the encouragement of those who should make experiments for the improvement of this manufacture; and the following advertisement was ordered to be published.

‘ Cat and Fiddle Lodge, July 21, 1754.

‘ Present, the Vice-Grand.

‘ Ordered, that for the encouragement of the making thunder and lightning, the following premiums be given by this society, to be paid by their secretary within twelve months after the same shall be respectively adjudged to the several claimants:

‘ To any person or persons who shall on or before Christmas-day next, by a clap of electrical thunder, accompanied by a sufficient quantity of lightning, beat down and destroy the dome of St. Paul’s cathedral, 20s.

‘ To ditto for ditto, the Monument on Fish-street-hill, 15s.

‘ Covent-Garden church, 7s. 6d.

‘ Westminster-hall in Term-time, 5s.

‘ Westminster bridge, 2s. 6d.

‘ For the first man under forty, and the first woman with child, killed by the said thunder and lightning; and for the first hay-rick of thirty load and upward, burnt and consumed, 1s. each.’

When, from the above encouragement, these useful works shall be performed, we may conclude the manufacture brought to perfection: and then there will remain a few queries most humbly to be submitted to the wisdom of the legislature.

I. Whether when we have got a stock in hand, more than sufficient for our own consumption, we should suffer any to be exported?

II. What market will it be likely to meet with abroad?

And III. Whether it will be most prudent to trust this commodity in private hands, or in the hands of the ministry, the city of London, or the crown?

In regard to the first of these queries, I am of opinion that we may safely venture to export whatever is more than sufficient for our home consumption, provided it be shipped on board our vessels, and insured by the French.

As to query the second, it is not to be doubted that the commodity will meet with a good foreign market. I have conversed with several merchants upon the subject, and know of two who have already received orders from their correspondents at Jamaica to send twenty tons to Barbadoes, to make a hurricane in that island; and there are orders from Barbadoes to send more than double the quantity to Jamaica. I am also assured that a certain Spanish governor, who is to pass his accounts next spring, has offered ten thousand pounds for a tornado, provided it can be sent over before Christmas.

The last of these queries is, I own, the most difficult to be answered: I shall therefore submit it to the public, with only observing, that as a good patriot I am against giving it into the hands of the crown, from an opinion that his present Majesty will forbid the use of it in his own dominions, and command the whole of it to be sent abroad amongst our most inveterate enemies.

I am, sir,
Your most humble servant,
M. D.

No. 84. THURSDAY, AUGUST 8, 1754.



I AM indebted to a correspondent for the following allegory. The manner in which it is written, and the moral it contains, will be a better recommendation of it than any compliment of mine. I shall therefore lay it before my readers without farther preface.

Prosperity and Adversity, the daughters of Providence, were sent to the house of a rich Phœnician merchant, named Velasco, whose residence was at Tyre, the capital city of that kingdom.

Prosperity, the eldest, was beautiful as the morning, and cheerful as the spring; but Adversity was sorrowful and ill-favoured.

Velasco had two sons, Felix and Uranio. They were both bred to commerce, though liberally educated, and had lived together from their infancy in the strictest harmony and friendship. But love, before whom all the affections of the soul are as the traces of a ship upon the ocean, which remains only for a moment, threatened in an evil hour to set them at variance; for both were become enamoured with the beauties of Prosperity. The nymph, like one of the daughters of men, gave encouragement to each by turns; but to avoid a particular declaration, she avowed a resolution never to marry, unless her sister, from whom she said it was impossible for her to be long separated, was married at the same time.

Velasco, who was no stranger to the passions of his sons, and who dreaded every thing from their violence, to prevent consequences, obliged them by his au-

thority to decide their pretensions by lots; each previously engaging in a solemn oath to marry the nymph that should fall to his share. The lots were accordingly drawn; and Prosperity became the wife of Felix, and Adversity of Uranio.

Soon after the celebration of these nuptials Velasco died, having bequeathed to his eldest son Felix the house wherein he dwelt, together with the greatest part of his large fortune and effects.

The husband of Prosperity was so transported with the gay disposition and enchanting beauties of his bride, that he clothed her in gold and silver, and adorned her with jewels of inestimable value. He built a palace for her in the woods; he turned rivers into his gardens, and beautified their banks with temples and pavilions. He entertained at his table the nobles of the land, delighting their ears with music, and their eyes with magnificence. But his kindred he beheld as strangers, and the companions of his youth passed by unregarded. His brother also became hateful in his sight, and in process of time he commanded the doors of his house to be shut against him.

But as the stream flows from its channel and loses itself among the valleys, unless confined by banks; so also will the current of fortune be dissipated, unless bounded by economy. In a few years the estate of Felix was wasted by extravagance, his merchandize failed him by neglect, and his effects were seized by the merciless hands of creditors. He applied himself for support to the nobles and great men whom he had feasted and made presents to, but his voice was as the voice of a stranger, and they remembered not his face. The friends whom he had neglected derided him in their turn; his wife also insulted him, and turned her back upon him and fled. Yet was his

heart so bewitched with her sorceries, that he pursued her with entreaties, till by her haste to abandon him, her mask fell off, and discovered to him a face as withered and deformed, as before it had appeared youthful and engaging.

What became of him afterwards tradition does not relate with certainty. It is believed that he fled into Egypt, and lived precariously on the scanty benevolence of a few friends, who had not totally deserted him, and that he died in a short time, wretched and an exile.

Let us now return to Uranio, who, as we have already observed, had been driven out of doors by his brother Felix. Adversity, though hateful to his heart, and a spectre to his eyes, was the constant attendant upon his steps; and to aggravate his sorrow, he received certain intelligence that his richest vessel was taken by a Sardinian pirate; that another was lost upon the Libyan Syrtes; and, to complete all, that the banker with whom the greatest part of his ready money was entrusted had deserted his creditors and retired into Sicily. Collecting, therefore, the small remains of his fortune, he bid adieu to Tyre, and, led by Adversity through unfrequented roads and forests overgrown with thickets, he came at last to a small village at the foot of a mountain. Here they took up their abode for some time; and Adversity, in return for all the anxiety he had suffered, softening the severity of her looks, administered to him the most faithful counsel, weaning his heart from the immoderate love of earthly things, and teaching him to revere the Gods, and to place his whole trust and happiness in their government and protection. She humanized his soul, made him modest and humble, taught him to compassionate the distresses of his fellow-creatures, and inclined him to relieve them.

‘ I am sent,’ said she, ‘ by the Gods to those alone whom they love: for I not only train them up by my severe discipline to future glory, but also prepare them to receive with a greater relish all such moderate enjoyments as are not inconsistent with this probationary state. As the spider, when assailed, seeks shelter in its inmost web, so the mind which I afflict contracts its wandering thought, and flies for happiness to itself. It was I who raised the characters of Cato, Socrates, and Timoleon to so divine a height, and set them up as guides and examples to every future age. Prosperity, my smiling but treacherous sister, too frequently delivers those whom she has seduced to be scourged by her cruel followers, Anguish and Despair: while Adversity never fails to lead those who will be instructed by her to the blissful habitations of Tranquillity and Content.’

Uranio listened to her words with great attention; and as he looked earnestly on her face, the deformity of it seemed insensibly to decrease. By gentle degrees his aversion to her abated; and at last, he gave himself wholly up to her counsel and direction. She would often repeat to him the wise maxim of the philosopher, ‘ That those who want the fewest things approach nearest to the Gods, who want nothing.’ She admonished him to turn his eyes to the many thousands beneath him, instead of gazing on the few who live in pomp and splendor; and in his addresses to the Gods, instead of asking for riches and popularity, to pray for a virtuous mind, a quiet state, an unblamable life, and a death full of good hopes.

Finding him to be every day more and more composed and resigned, though neither enamoured of her face nor delighted with her society, she at last addressed him in the following manner:

‘ As gold is purged and refined from dross by the fire, so is Adversity sent by Providence to try and improve the virtue of mortals. The end obtained, my task is finished ; and I now leave you, to go and give an account of my charge. Your brother, whose lot was Prosperity, and whose condition you so much envied, after having experienced the error of his choice, is at last released by death from the most wretched of lives. Happy has it been for Uranio, that his lot was Adversity, whom if he remembers as he ought, his life will be honourable, and his death happy.’

As she pronounced these words, she vanished from his sight. But though her features at that moment, instead of inspiring their usual horror, seemed to display a kind of languishing beauty, yet as Uranio, in spite of his utmost efforts, could never prevail upon himself to love her, he neither regretted her departure, nor wished for her return. But though he rejoiced in her absence, he treasured up her counsels in his heart, and grew happy by the practice of them.

He afterwards betook himself again to merchandize ; and having in a short time acquired a competency sufficient for the real enjoyments of life, he retreated to a little farm, which he had bought for that purpose, and where he determined to continue the remainder of his days. Here he employed his time in planting, gardening, and husbandry, in quelling all disorderly passions, and in forming his mind by the lessons of Adversity. He took great delight in a little cell or hermitage in his garden, which stood under a tuft of trees, encompassed with eglantine and honey-suckles. Adjoining to it was a cold bath formed by a spring issuing from a rock, and over the door was written in large characters the following inscription :

Beneath this moss-grown roof, within this cell,
Truth, Liberty, Content, and Virtue dwell.
Say, you who dare this happy place disdain,
What Palace can display so fair a train?

He lived to a good old age; and died honoured
and lamented.

No. 85. THURSDAY, AUGUST 15, 1754.

TO MR. FITZ-ADAM.

SIR,

I AM a young country bride of eighteen (if I may call myself a bride after having been married a month and two days); and if my husband, who every body says is the handsomest and best made man in the county, does not flatter me, I am as agreeable as youth, health, good features, a clear skin, and an easy shape can make me. We both married for love; and I may venture to say that no couple in the world have been happier than we. But alas! Mr. Fitz-Adam, within this week the dear man has appeared to be unusually thoughtful and low-spirited; and the day before yesterday he came booted to me at breakfast, and told me that a sudden and unexpected affair had made it necessary for him to set out that morning for his estate in Berkshire.

As I thought it my duty not to pry into more than he had a mind to tell me, I only wished him a safe journey and a speedy return, and saw him take horse.

I amused myself as well as I could the first day of his absence by looking into family affairs. The second day I was visited by a widow lady in the

neighbourhood, who from a vast flow of spirits, and a particular freedom of speech, is thought by our sober country people to be a very odd kind of a lady. 'My dear creature!' said she, running up to me and saluting me, 'I heard you were alone, and thought it would be a charity to visit the forsaken and afflicted.' 'Indeed, madam,' answered I with a sigh, 'I am foolishly out of spirits.' 'Nay,' says she, 'my dear, I am far from blaming you; the absence of a husband a month after marriage is as bad as his death would be some years hence.' 'How, madam,' interrupted I, 'do you think—?' 'Nay, nay, no grave faces,' she replied, 'I only speak for myself. I had not been married to Major Machoney three weeks before he was ordered away with his regiment to Flanders; and I assure you that the news of his death four months after did not shock me half so much as our first parting.' 'You are not in earnest!' cried I with astonishment. 'Why not?' said she. 'But I should have told you, my dear, that he had lost a leg and an arm the week before; so that I was quite prepared: and indeed it was always a sentiment of mine, that a brave man had better be dead than disabled. But pray,' continued she, smiling and looking oddly with her eyes, 'where is your husband, child?' I told her business had called him into Berkshire. 'Yes, yes,' says she, 'we all know his business. Have you never heard of his having an uncle in that county? Depend upon it, my dear, he is gone to see his uncle.'

I was greatly surprised at hearing of my husband's uncle, having never received the least hint from him that he had any such relation; and of this Mrs. Machoney would give me no other information, than by assuring me, that to her certain knowledge he was gone to see his uncle.

A particular friend of my husband dropt in upon us at this instant, who, upon my inquiring after this uncle, and if he had heard his friend talk of making him a visit, seemed to be of the widow's opinion, though he could not take upon him to assert that he had ever seen him, or so much as knew in what part of Berkshire he lived.

I began now to grow uneasy; for as I had been married in the face of the world, and as none of my own relations were strangers to my husband, I thought it a little odd that any of his should be so to me. But I was soon eased of this perplexity by being thrown into a greater. As I have constantly taken in your papers, it occurred to me all at once, that this uncle whom my husband was gone to see was no other than a Welsh uncle, who, according to the fifty-sixth number of the *World*, is one who officiates in genteel families in the capacity of a *hearer*. And now it went to my very heart, to think that I had so tired my husband by my talkativeness, as to compel him to take a journey into Berkshire in search of a hearer. It is impossible to tell you what pain it gave me. Yet surely some allowance should be made for the prattling of a bride, who has a thousand things to say to a husband, which she durst not to her lover. But whatever excuses may be made for me, either from my youth, my sex, my fondness, or my love of talking, it gives me the most piercing concern to know that I am the sole cause of his taking this journey; and it is to tell him of this concern, and the amendment it has produced, that I trouble you with this letter; which if it should find him in his retreat (for the *World* I am told is in almost every part of England) may hasten him to his home again, where he shall find me for my whole life to come the most willing of all hearers.

I assure you, sir, I am not myself when I think on what I have done. Good Heaven! I cry twenty times an hour, that in the very first month of our marriage I should have sent the dear creature upon a visit to an uncle! I would do any thing, Mr. Fitz-Adam, to prevent the frequency of these visits; and that he may know more of my mind than I can have courage to tell him any other way, I beg your immediate publication of this letter; which, as it cannot be an entertainment to your readers, will be a proof of your great good-nature, and the highest obligation to,

Sir,

Your most humble servant, and admirer,
S. W.

MR. FITZ-ADAM,

Your attempt in your fifty-seventh paper to rescue parsons, authors, and cuckolds, from the contempt which the generality of mankind are too apt to entertain of them, was extremely generous and praiseworthy. It is in the triple capacity of parson, author, and cuckold, that I write this letter. By the will of my parents, I am a parson: by my own wants, I am an author; and by the wants of my wife, I am a cuckold. So that were all or either of these professions in reality contemptible, as I am neither of them by choice, I ought in justice to escape the obloquy that attends them.

In regard to my parents (who are now at rest in their graves) I acquit them of any evil intention in making me a parson. Of myself I can truly say, that my wants were so urgent, I must either have starved or turned author; and as to my wife, every body who knows her will acknowledge her wants to have been equally urgent, by the pains she has taken to get them supplied.

But notwithstanding all these circumstances in my favour, and what is still more, the honour you have done us by espousing our cause, I do not find that I am one jot the better treated. As a parson, I am preaching every Sunday to an audience fast asleep: as an author, the squire of the parish, and all those that hunt with him, are removing their handkerchiefs from the pocket that is next me as often as I sit down at table with them: and as a cuckold, the very children in the streets are taught to hold up their fingers to their foreheads, and butt at me as I pass by them.

No longer ago than yesterday, I overheard my daughter Jenny, a girl of six years old, inquiring of her mother what made papa be such a cuckold; for that Miss Maddox, and Miss Tomlinson, and all the misses at school, said, that to be sure he must be a sad man to be such a cuckold. And two days ago my little boy, who is but a year older than his sister, ran crying into the kitchen as I was chiding him for not saying his catechism, and told the maid that papa had tossed him with his horns. A neighbour's daughter indeed, who is just entering into her teens, tells me that she should like a cuckold for a husband of all things, for that I am so pure and good-humoured nothing can be like it. To say the truth, I have hardly a friend in the world, out of my own family, except this girl, and an officer of the blues, whose quarters are within a few doors of us, and who often talks to my wife about a living which is in his father's gift, and which upon the death of the present incumbent he assures her shall be mine. I know of no obligations that this gentleman is under to me, except that he has been remarkably lucky in horse-flesh since his coming into these parts; and which it is said he ascribes solely to his acquaintance in my family. But though

I may now and then have given him my opinion, his success that way has been more owing to his own skill than to any judgment of mine.

But I am running my letter into length, when I only intended to tell you, that your paper upon the three orders to which I belong, though well intended, has failed of its effect: and to assure you that in consideration of the intention, as a parson, I shall pray for you; as an author, I shall praise you; and as a cuckold, I shall be proud of an opportunity of making you acquainted with my wife.

I am, sir,

Your obliged and most humble servant,

T. H.

No. 86. THURSDAY, AUGUST 22, 1754.

*Tum violaria, et
Myrtus, et omnis copia narium,
Spargent olivetis odorem,
Fertilibus domino priori.*

HOR.

MR. FITZ-ADAM,

WHEN I consider how remarkably the several periods, in the rise and declension of ancient states, have been characterised by the varying manners of their people, I am apt to believe, that an inquiry into the importance of our present taste for flowers would be no very idle and uninteresting speculation. But as I would not willingly forestal any abler pen, on a subject that deserves to be considered by every patriot philosopher of the age, I shall endeavour to confine my present animadversions upon it within the narrow compass of my own private experience, and content

myself with giving a short account of the motives which induced me to commence a florist at first, and of the advantages which I have since derived from the offices of my profession.

It is observable, that the laws of decency and politeness are, for the most part, nothing but mere local institutions, very much limited in their authority, and very arbitrary and fluctuating in their nature; and that no one who offers himself a candidate for fame in matters of taste and fashion can succeed in his pretensions at first, without accommodating them to the approbation of popular prejudice, or hold his reputation, after he has once procured it, on any safer tenure than the uncertain voice of the multitude. Now, I must own, I imagined (and perhaps many have been as much deceived in this point as myself) that the vegetable virtuoso's credit was more particularly subject to this precarious dependence, and that the chief security of its support consisted only in the accidental concurrence of numbers in an unaccountable and trifling pursuit. And it is very probable that I should never have been convinced of the contrary, had I not been fortunately induced to purchase a small collection of flowers, in order to escape the odious imputation of a tasteless singularity. But as many a commendable action has been undertaken at first on no better principle than the fear of shame, which has afterwards been prosecuted on a more generous motive; so was I brought at length to improve that collection in consequence of my own thorough conviction of its great importance, which was originally procured in compliance only with the fancies of other people.

Being rather of a contemplative turn, and not very apt to whistle away any of my vacant time, I was not long in discovering that the cultivation of flowers had in it a much finer mixture of the *utile*

dulci than any other employment whatever. But before I attempt to show in what particular respects it is mostly suited to instruct and delight, I would willingly remove two very common objections, notwithstanding, as their absurdity is almost as evident as any thing belonging to them, they may be thought hardly worthy of my notice. Supposing then, that such an inconsiderate and superficial observer of things may possibly be met with, as shall reckon it any disparagement to the intrinsic value of a flower, that it is exposed to a great variety of accidents from the inclemency of the weather, and perpetually subject to the irregular dominion of the solar influence; it will be sufficient to convince him of his mistake, if he is not quite incapable of being convinced at all, only just to remind him of the uncertain condition of his own prosperity, and admonish him to reflect how little secure he is of being always preserved from the oppressive storms, or of enjoying the constant sunshine of fortune. And if that other objection, drawn from the supposed vanity of regarding any thing of such a short duration as the bloom of a flower, be admitted as conclusive, it must unavoidably prove a great deal too much; since it will not only hold with equal force against every temporal enjoyment, and all worldly satisfactions whatever; but (which I must confess is a very shocking consideration to me) will utterly annihilate all those engaging qualities of the fair sex, which are most essentially necessary to recommend them to our love and admiration. Let me add, moreover, that if there be that real similitude, which the frequency of the allusion seems to make unquestionable, between human life and a flower; it follows, that no man can pretend to a right of despising the one, that would be thought to place any value on the other.

Nothing ought to be reckoned good any farther than as it contributes to our happiness. The value we put upon any possession or enjoyment is the only standard that can be properly applied to determine its real worth. Whatever therefore is best fitted to administer delight to any particular person ought certainly to be regarded, by him at least, as the chief ingredient of that *summum bonum*, which, though it be the common end of all our endeavours, has however been pursued by as many different means as there have been different men. But supposing that no allowances were to be made in favour of singular propensities, yet he that can enlarge the sphere of his enjoyments, by contracting the extent of his possessions, ought, in all reasonable construction, to be deemed a much happier man, than he who, under a foolish persuasion that he is securing to himself an inexhaustible fund of delight, shall take incessant pains to augment those riches, and extend those territories, which, after all, will as much disqualify him for enjoyment, as an unwieldy corpulency of person would incapacitate him for expedition. And one might easily produce many instances of men, who, by a prudent conversion of such incumbrances into flowers, have received more satisfaction from the produce of a small parterre than from the income of a large estate; and found themselves as completely happy as a Corycius, after they had once reduced their concerns to the easy management of a single acre.

Folly may suggest what it pleases: but that alone ought to be esteemed a trifle, which is of no consequence; whereas there is nothing in nature unworthy of a wise man's regard, because the most inferior of all her productions may, in some light or another, be made instrumental to his improvement.

Were we to reflect, in a proper manner, on the correlative importance of such objects, as may be thought useless and insignificant when considered only with regard to themselves, we should discover a mediate sort of union between the widest links of that indefinite chain which holds together the constituents of the universe; we should perceive that all those things, which are most dissimilar in every other respect, do however agree in that common destination, whereby they become so many equally important parts of one stupendous whole: and we should find as fit a place for the discovery of truth in every flower-garden as in the celebrated groves of Cadmus.

It has been from this school that I have procured the best part of my philosophy; and from this too have I learnt to improve and confirm my morals. The volume of nature is so full of passages above the explication of human learning, that the best proof of our having studied it with uncommon diligence and success must consist chiefly in our being able to produce from it many uncommon instances of our ignorance; and I have the vanity, or I should rather say the modesty, to boast, that I have discovered difficulties enough in one single leaf of it to clear up my understanding from the stupifying influence of a conceited sufficiency, and to improve my reason into a perfect diffidence of its utmost force and penetration. Nor have I a flower in my possession that is less abounding in moral instruction than in beauty and sweetness. I cannot observe that industrious nicety with which the bee examines into every thing that comes in his way, without considering it as a reproachful admonition to myself: and if I do not collect some useful lesson, that may support me under all the ensuing revolutions of my life, from

every flower that such an insect can extract provision from against the future exigences of his, I am ready to place it to the account of my negligence, and to think myself guilty of the most unpardonable folly, in suffering him alone to profit from that, which I assume the absurd privilege of calling my own.

In short, there is such a close affinity between a proper cultivation of a flower-garden and a right discipline of the mind, that it is almost impossible for any thoughtful person, that has made any proficiency in the one, to avoid paying a due attention to the other. That industry and care, which are so requisite to cleanse a garden from all sorts of weeds, will naturally suggest to him how much more expedient it would be to exert the same diligence in eradicating all sorts of prejudices, follies, and vices from the mind, where they will be as sure to prevail, without a great deal of care and correction, as common weeds in a neglected piece of ground. And as it requires more pains to extirpate some weeds than others, according as they are more firmly fixt, more numerous, or more naturalized to the soil; so those faults will be found the most difficult to be suppressed which have been of the longest growth, and taken the deepest root; which are more predominant in number, and most congenial to the constitution.

No. 87. THURSDAY, AUGUST 29, 1754.

THERE is no one subject that has given such frequent exercise to the pens of my correspondents as the behaviour of servants. Were I to have published all the letters I have received upon it (not to mention

the abuses that have been sent me for refusing to make those letters public) they would almost have equalled in number the letters that have been sent me upon all other subjects. *The plague of servants* is the phrase in every body's mouth: yet how fond we are of increasing this plague, even to the destruction of our fortunes, may be seen in almost every family that has any pretensions to gentility. But I must beg pardon of these correspondents for thinking a little differently from them upon this occasion; or rather for taking the part of servants in opposition to their masters.

Having passed the greatest part of my life in families, and being a strict (though I hope not an impertinent) observer of all occurrences that happen in them, I was very early of opinion that the good or bad qualities of servants were generally to be ascribed to the conduct of their masters; and by repeated experience since, I am become so sanguine in this opinion, that when I have a mind to study any master or mistress thoroughly, I observe with circumspection the particular dispositions and behaviour of their servants. If I find cheerfulness in their countenances, sobriety in their manners, neatness in their persons, readiness in their attendance, and harmony among themselves, I always conclude that the master and mistress of such servants have hearts which (according to a significant expression in low life) *lie in the right places*. On the contrary, wherever I see servants with sullenness or ill-nature in their looks, with slothfulness in their motions, or slovenliness in their clothes; or, above all, when I hear them quarrelling among themselves; I conclude that they are copying the manners of those they serve, and that the master and mistress of that house, whatever characters they

may bear in the world, are disagreeable in themselves, and a plague to all about them.

By this rule I am generally able to judge with what degree of estimation I am received at the several tea-tables where I visit. I look only at the servant to know if I am a welcome guest to his mistress and the family ; if he opens the door to me with a look of indifference, or seems slack in his attendance upon me, I shorten the time of my stay, and lessen the number of my visits at that house. But if he shows me up stairs with a good grace, or looks at me with attention while I am indulging an old man's fondness for prattling, I am as well satisfied of his mistress's regard for me, as if she had offered me her purse.

The Spectator, speaking of a family of servants, says, ' That instead of flying from the parts of the house through which their master is passing, they industriously contrive to place themselves in his way.' And I am intimate in a family, where the only unpleasant hours that servants know are those in which the master and mistress of the house are absent. I have observed with great delight, when my friend and his lady have been stepping into the coach for a journey of a few days, that the men and maid servants have been crowding to the door, and with tears in their eyes waiting for the last kind nod, as they have driven from the house. It has done my heart good, when in the absence of their master and mistress I have looked in upon these honest people, to see with what eagerness they have run to me, to inquire, every one at once, if I had heard any news of their benefactors, and at what time they would return. It would be unnecessary, after what I have said of these servants, to enter upon the characters of the master and mistress. I shall content myself with observing, that

if all those who have servants were of the same disposition with the people I am speaking of, I should hardly have had occasion to write upon this subject.

Seneca says of servants, 'That they are a kind of humble friends.' (Not according to the modern acceptance of humble friends; for by such are meant those who are to be still more dependent on our humours, and who, in return for precarious meat and drink, are to think, speak, and act exactly as we would have them.) He goes on to observe, 'That it is the part of a wise and good man to deal with his inferior as he would have his superior deal with him; fortune having no more power over servants than over their masters: and he that duly considers how many servants have come to be masters, and how many masters to be servants, will lay no great stress of argument either upon the one or upon the other. Some use their servants worse than beasts, in slavish attendances between their drink and their lusts; as if they were not made of the same materials with their masters, or to breathe the same air, or to die under the same conditions. It is worthy observation (continues he) that the most imperious masters over their own servants are at the same time the most abject slaves to the servants of other masters. I will not distinguish a servant by his office, but by his manners; the one is the work of fortune, the other of virtue.'

Thus far says Seneca: and indeed the wretchedness of servitude is altogether owing to the pride of superiority; a pride, which, if properly exerted, would appear in making those happy whom fortune has made dependent upon us for favour and support. This indeed would be the pride of a man; and I have always considered it as the principal happiness of every master, that Heaven has placed him

in a situation to make life easy and comfortable to those whose lot it is to depend upon him for bread.

For my own part, I have always been of opinion that the master is as much obliged to the servant who acquits himself in his office with diligence and faithfulness, as the servant to the master for his favour and indulgence. But in the common opinion it is otherwise; and the performance of those duties which shall entitle the servant to a reward in heaven, shall be insufficient to procure him either a civil word or a kind look from his imperious master.

How contrary a behaviour is that of the family above-mentioned! If a servant has done his duty, he is sure to be commended for it; if through incapacity or inadvertency he has committed a fault, it is passed over with good-humour; or if through carelessness or design, the admonitions he receives are the admonitions of a friend, who advises him, for his own sake, to amendment, and encourages him to set about it by gentleness and persuasion. It may be worth the mentioning, that my friend's butler was cured of a violent inclination to sotting, by having the keys of the cellar delivered to his keeping; and that the housekeeper, who is one of the most thoughtful and discreet matrons I know of, was one of the giddiest girls alive, till the affairs of the family were thrown into her hands.

I do not mean to insinuate by these circumstances, that every drunken footman should keep the keys of his master's cellar, or that every madcap of a maid should be intrusted, by way of sobering her, with the management of a family; I only mentioned them to show that even vices and follies are sometimes to be cured by good usage; and if so, how greatly may good qualities be improved by the same indulgent behaviour!

I have said in a former paper, that people are more likely to be praised into good qualities than to be railed out of bad ones ; and I have always found, that to commend a servant for doing right (and every servant does right sometimes) has had a much better effect than chiding and complaining when he has happened to do wrong. To cherish the desire of pleasing in a servant, you must show him that you are pleased ; for what encouragement is there for his perseverance, unless you tell him at first that he is in the right way ?

To conclude this subject ; I would have servants considered as reasonable beings ; as those, who though they have the frailties of men, have also their virtues, their affections, and their feelings : that they can repay good offices with gratitude, and ill ones with neglect ; and that they are entitled to our favour, till they have deserved our displeasure. I shall only add, for the information of my correspondents, that I shall pay no regard to the complaints that are sent me against bad servants, unless I am thoroughly convinced that they come from good masters.

No. 88. THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 5, 1754.

TO MR. FITZ-ADAM.

SIR,

FROM a full conviction that your ears are always open to the afflicted, I presume to send you the story of my distress, which is left to your discretion whether or no it be deserving of public commiseration. Previous, however, to what relates immediately to my-

self, be so kind as to indulge an elderly man, whose infirmity is to be talkative, and who delights in a long train of animadversions upon every interesting occurrence.

At the creation of your World, your modesty suggested that the advantages accruing from it might enable you in due time to keep a one-horse chair, and that as soon as you were in possession of this vehicle, you would invite the reader to a seat in it, and occasionally make the tour of the adjacent villages. But whether you are enabled to set up this equipage or not, I would advise you, at this season of the year, to withdraw your laudable purpose of reforming vice triumphant in town, and to let your endeavours be directed to confirm virtue militant in the country. Drinking, gaming, atheism, and the minor vices, which from time immemorial have more or less swarmed in our capital, have been combated by the most eminent divines, moralists, and poets, and all to no purpose. For my own part, I cannot help looking upon almost every species of dissoluteness as a kind of plague; and if I was worthy of advising the legislature, I should propose that a line of circumvallation might be made at the distance of five miles all round the town, and a guard appointed to prohibit all persons, betraying the least symptom of any of these epidemical diseases, from passing the line. Provided always, that in case a radical cure shall be effected on a patient or patients, he, she, or they, on a proper certificate declaring them free from all infection, may be privileged to quit those noisome quarters, and retire into the country. I can think of no other method by which the miserable objects that range under the several denominations of gamblers, swearers, liars, drunkards, coxcombs, fashion-mongers, &c. in either sex, may be excluded all communion with those who are untainted.

A considerate person cannot pass a coxcomb in his walks, without being sensibly hurt at the reflection that such a calamity is incident to human nature. These deplorable creatures are incapacitated from concealing their complaint: a primary symptom is a total suppression of every reasonable thought; after which there can be no wonder, if, when they are become fools, they put on the habit of their order, and continue to fatigue the invention of their tradesmen, with a view to beguile the tediousness of time.

What, Mr. Fitz-Adam, shall we say to those persons who will subject themselves to infection by a communication with such wretches? I could as soon pay a visit to a man born deaf and dumb, for the sake of conversation, as deceive myself with the idea of improvement with one of these coxcombs. The notoriety of the symptoms attending this disease makes it needless to recite them all; a vast pomp of dress, an habitual contraction of the muscles to a grin, with a continual incoherent kind of prattle, are so many characteristics of their distemper. And, I fear, the validity of our plea would be rejected, should we urge that we fell inadvertently into their company; since they generally carry their heads, like those of posts on a footpath, sufficiently whitened, to deter even the most heedless from stumbling on them in the dark.

Among the several pestilences which constitute the general plague, no one is of equal fatality with that of fashion. Those who are seized with this phrensy, as they are the most numerous, so are they the most extravagant in their actions. The females discover their being tainted, by every gesticulation of a Cousin Betty. They wear no cap, and only substitute in its room variety of trumpery ribands, tied up with no other propriety than the present fit

shall happen to direct. Let your eye travel over the whole person, and by the disposition of the dress you will no longer hesitate if the imagination is disturbed. By what means, Mr. Fitz-Adam, except by the effects, shall we determine the *mens sana*? And what judgment ought we to pass upon those crowds of females, who are every day tottering along the public walks upon peg-heels? Nothing, surely, can be more repugnant to common sense than this contrivance in the ladies to weaken their support, who had before too great an aptitude to fall. If there can be any reason assigned for so strange a conduct, it must be this, that they thought it necessary to diminish the base, after they had lightened the capital.

It would be a downright arraignment of your sagacity to imagine that the malignant consequences annexed to this distemper are unnoticed by you. An object, whose entire mass of blood is corrupted by fashion, becomes not unworthy the cognizance of the higher powers, as the most prejudicial being to a civil society. In order to think as I do, you need only to consider what are the evils consequential to fashion. Are they not those of folly, pride, extravagance, gaming, and even dishonesty? Persons afflicted with this malady are apt to imagine themselves under no obligation to pay their just debts; while those contracted at a gaming-table are to be discharged with all the punctuality of honesty.

These reflections, Mr. Fitz-Adam, are the result of a heart-felt concern for the good of my country. The prosperous growth of every kind of iniquity cannot fail, in the end, of endangering her political health. One should be apt to believe that our own soil was not pregnant enough with vice, while we are daily adopting every exotic folly. Our natural

enemy, even antecedent to conquest, is imposing upon us, not only her language, but her manners and her dress. A superficial view of the history of old Rome will present us with every similar circumstance of corruption.—God forbid a similar fate should overtake us!

I have hitherto suppressed an inclination to trouble you with my disapprobation of the times; and nothing less than an open violation of all the laws of decency, good sense, and duty, in my own family, could have prompted me to enlarge the list of your correspondents. I am now, sir, at my paternal estate, where I constantly reside, unless some unavoidable occurrence breaks in upon my retirement, and calls me to town. In the younger part of my days, by virtue of public employments, I was admitted to a pretty large commerce with mankind; but on my father's decease, satiated with the pleasures of high life, I withdrew in my forty-first year to the place I now write from. I am conscious of no very material imprudence that I have been guilty of, except my marriage, which has shaded my visionary prospect of happiness with the heaviest disquietude. Two daughters only are the issue of this marriage, who, thanks to the tuition of their mother, are not wanting in any single accomplishment of modish education. They speak French before they understand English, and play at cards for pounds, without knowing the value of a shilling; and, in a word, by a patrician disrelish of economy, speak themselves the incontestable children of Sir Pope Pedigree's daughter. I forbear to mention the manner in which (with their mother's connivance) they affect to expose the obscurity of my family; because I must acknowledge it to have been destitute of the honour of a dignified spendthrift, or an illustrious suicide.

Having lived so long a voluntary exile from the beau monde, my maxims are exploded as quite obsolete. My wife and daughters are perpetually assuring me that I act in no respect like any of my polite neighbours: I will not dispute that they have some colour of truth for this assertion; for you must be sensible, Mr. Fitz-Adam, that it is no easy matter for a man in his grand climacteric to divest himself of old accustomed prejudices; and though I profess all imaginable deference to my great neighbours, they must excuse the awkward particularity I have of paying my debts, and of obstinately persevering in going now and then to church. Besides what I have mentioned, I have the peculiar felicity of seeing, that nothing which either my ancestors or I have done, within or without doors, is in the least correspondent with my family's taste. The garden is a devoted victim to their caprice: last summer they erected in it a Chinese temple, but it proved too cold to be inhabited. In the winter, all my Christmas blocks went to the composition of a hermitage, which is only tenanted by my girls, and the female hermits of taste of their acquaintance. This spring I narrowly escaped the reputation of building a ruin in my park; but luckily, as my workmen were lopping some of my trees, they opened, by mere accident, a prospect to my Lord Killdollar's house, the noblest, perhaps, and most natural ruin extant.

It is impossible for you to conceive the instances I could enumerate; but not to tire your patience by a long detail of grievances, I shall close my letter with observing, that I see a succession of them before me while my wife is above polluting the blood of the Pedigrees, by admitting into her composition the least tincture of affability; and while my daughters are in a fair way of dying unmarried, by their polite be-

haviour, and meretricious style of dress. If the reasonableness of my complaint should obtain the sanction of your approbation, and be countenanced in the World, it will in some measure alleviate the affliction of,

Sir,

Your constant reader and admirer.

No. 89. THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 12, 1754.

It has been the constant practice ever since I can remember for people to recommend the particular wares they deal in, by setting forth that they are more essentially necessary at the present time than they were ever known to be in times past. The doctor, to recommend his elixir for the nerves, addresses you with, 'Never were nervous decays, &c. so frequent as at present.' The man of learning prefaces his discourse upon occult qualities with, 'Never was there so total a decay of literature as at present;' and the divine introduces his volume of sermons with, 'Never did sin and folly abound so as at present.'

But though this method may be a very good one, and may have contributed greatly to the increase of trade, I have always considered it as somewhat bordering upon craft, and have therefore rejected it, to pursue a contrary practice. Never was mankind so good as at present, I say again and again: for however unwise or unrighteous the people of these nations may have been two years ago, it is hardly to be conceived how greatly they are improved in their understandings, and amended in their morals, by the extensive circulation of these my lucubrations.

Many persons are of opinion (I suppose from the effects which they find to have been produced in themselves) that every individual of my readers has been in some respect or other the better for me: but this perhaps may be carrying the matter a little too far; and indeed I have a private reason for thinking that there may be here and there one, who, though a considerable reader of these excellent essays, has received no benefit from them at all. There are people in the world, who, because they pride themselves upon contradicting an established opinion, have suggested in a whisper, that this is not absolutely, and to all intents and purposes, the very best paper that has hitherto been published in any age or country. And to confess a truth, which will, no doubt, be as surprising to my readers as it was to me, I have actually received a letter, written in sober sadness, and without the least intention to be witty, insinuating that I am growing dull, and advising me to lay down my paper, while I can do it with honour. But as I have hitherto found my wit to be inexhaustible, and as I have now, as much as ever, the good of my country at heart, I am willing to continue these my labours while there are the least gleanings of folly remaining, and till I can have the glory of effecting a thorough reformation.

To follow this great and laudable design, I must beg of my correspondents to be very diligent in their inquiries after what is doing in town, and that they will neglect no opportunity of transmitting me all the intelligence they can get. I should be glad to know, among other matters of consequence, if there is yet any such thing as play going on at White's. I should like also to hear that the proposal for establishing lectures in divinity and moral philosophy next winter in the great room at St. James's coffee-

house has met with the approbation of the whole club. The repeated assurances which I am daily receiving that fornication and adultery are entirely at a stand in this great metropolis, are highly agreeable to me; as also that the great increase of bloom, which has of late been so very observable on the cheeks of ladies of fashion, is wholly owing to their abhorrence of cards and late hours. I hear with great self-congratulation and delight from the city, that they are hourly increasing in frugality and industry, and that neither hazard, nor any unlawful game at cards, has been so much as thought of at their clubs for this twelve-month past. But above all, I am charmed with the accounts which I have from time to time received of the last general election. That inflexible abhorrence of bribery and corruption, which so visibly and universally manifested itself among all ranks and orders of men, constituents as well as candidates, must be an incontestable proof of the consummate virtue of the present times.

From all these happy considerations, I am perfectly of opinion with the late Mr. Whiston, that the Millennium, or the kingdom of the just upon earth, is very near at hand. When that long-expected time arrives, I shall consider the plan of this paper as complete, and conclude it the Thursday following, with a benediction to my readers.

It has been owing to this general reformation (which I flatter myself has been principally brought about by these weekly essays) that I have thought fit to suppress certain letters, lately come to hand, which are filled with most unreasonable complaints against the iniquity of the times. One of these letters laments very emphatically the great increase of popery among us, and begs that I would postpone

every amusing speculation, to attack with gravity and argument the doctrine of transubstantiation. The same letter recommends, in a postscript, some necessary alterations to be made in the book of Common Prayer, and desires that my next paper may be an address to the bishops upon that occasion. Another of these letters inveighs bitterly against the universality of skittle-grounds in the gardens of people of fashion, and assures me that it is in vain to hope for a reformation, while gentlemen and ladies, nay, even the clergy themselves, are mis-spending their time in the unchristian-like diversions of porters and draymen. The letter signed Decorus, complaining of Brunetta's nakedness at church, had long ago received a place in these papers, if I could have been convinced that it had less of invention in it than of reality: for I am assured by a particular friend, who is a constant frequenter of all public places, that since my repeated animadversions on that subject, there is not a pair of naked shoulders to be seen either for love or money. He proceeds farther to assure me, that those excellent animadversions have given the ladies such an unconquerable aversion to all kinds of nakedness, that a party of them, going this summer from Richmond to Vauxhall by water, chose rather to see a handsome young fellow go to the bottom, as he was attempting to swim across the Thames, than to take him into their boat; and when the waterman begged for God's sake that they might save the young man's life, the eldest of the ladies protested with great vehemence, that she had rather the whole odious sex should perish than have her modesty affronted with the sight of a naked man.

But though every reformation of this kind is a sensible pleasure to me, I am very far from attributing the whole merit of it to myself; on the con-

trary, it is with the utmost pride and satisfaction that I acknowledge the many and great helps which I have received from correspondents, whose names, whenever they come to be mentioned in this undertaking, will reflect an honour upon my own. It is to these gentlemen, more than to myself, that I am to ascribe the reformation above-mentioned: and because, as I said before, in spite of our endeavours to make mankind perfect, there is still perhaps a little sprinkling of folly remaining amongst us; and as the Millennium may possibly be at a much greater distance than Mr. Whiston and I have so sanguinely imagined it to be; and moreover, considering the comparative weakness of my own abilities; I hereby request and entreat of my correspondents, that they will continue to favour me with their assistance in this work, which will most certainly be brought to a conclusion on the very first Thursday after the said Millennium shall commence.

I cannot show myself more in earnest upon this occasion than by closing my paper with the following humble address to one of its ablest supporters.

ADAM FITZ-ADAM TO THE * OF ***.

With grateful heart Fitz-Adam greets ye,
And in these rhymes, my Lord, entreats ye,
That you once more the World would prop,
Which, but for strength like yours, must drop:
For I, grown weak, and somewhat older,
Feel it too heavy on my shoulder:
And well I may; for bards have sung,
That giant Atlas, huge and strong,
Oft found his World too great a load,
And ask'd assistance of a God,

Who eased his back with little pain,
And set the World to rights again.
So I from you, my great Alcides,
(Whose aim my glory and my pride is)
Request, my Lord—You know my drift—
That you would lend me t' other lift:
Your smallest effort is enough,
The same you use in taking snuff:
You smile, my Lord—indeed 'tis true,
A finger and your thumb will do.

No. 90. THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 19, 1754.

AN old friend and fellow-student of mine at the university called upon me the other morning, and found me reading Plato's Symposium. I laid down my book to receive him, which, after the first usual compliments, he took up, saying, 'You will give me leave to see what was the object of your studies.' 'Nothing less than the divine Plato,' said I, 'that amiable philosopher—' 'With whom (interrupted my friend) Cicero declares that he would rather be in the wrong, than in the right way with any other.' 'I cannot,' replied I, 'carry my veneration for him to that degree of enthusiasm; but yet, wherever I understand him, (for I confess I do not every where) I prefer him to all the ancient philosophers. His Symposium more particularly engages and entertains me, as I see there the manners and characters of the most eminent men, of the politest times, of the politest city of Greece. And, with all due respect to the moderns, I much question whether an account of a modern Symposium, though written by the ablest hand, could be read with so much plea-

sure and improvement.' 'I do not know that,' replied my friend; 'for though I revere the ancients as much as you possibly can, and look upon the moderns as pigmies, when compared to those giants; yet if we come up to, or near them in any thing, it is the elegance and delicacy of our convivial intercourse.'

I was the more surprised at this doubt of my friend, because I knew that he implicitly subscribed to, and superstitiously maintained, all the articles of the classical faith. I therefore asked him whether he was serious? He answered me that he was: that in his mind, Plato spun out that silly affair of love too fine and too long; and that if I would but let him introduce me to the club, of which he was an unworthy member, he believed I should at least entertain the same doubt, or perhaps even decide in favour of the moderns. I thanked my friend for his kind offer, but added, that in whatever society he was an unworthy member, I should be still a more unworthy guest: that moreover my retired and domestic turn of life was as inconsistent with the engagements of a club, as my natural taciturnity amongst strangers would be misplaced in the midst of all that festal mirth and gaiety. 'You mistake me (answered my friend); every member of our club has the privilege of bringing one friend along with him, who is by no means thereby engaged to become a member of it: and as for your taciturnity, we have some silent members, who, by the way, are none of our worst. Silent people never spoil company, but, on the contrary, by being good hearers, encourage good speakers.' 'But I have another difficulty, (answered I) and that, I doubt, a very solid one, which is, that I drink nothing but water.' 'So much the worse for you,' (replied my friend, who, by-the-by, loves his bottle most academically); 'you

will pay for the claret you do not drink. We use no compulsion; every one drinks as little as he pleases—' 'Which I presume (interrupted I) is as much as he can.' 'That is just as it happens,' said he; 'sometimes, it is true, we make pretty good sittings; but for my own part, I choose to go home always before eleven: for, take my word for it, it is the sitting up late, and not the drink, that destroys the constitution.' As I found that my friend would have taken a refusal ill, I told him that for this once I would certainly attend him to the club, but desired him to give me previously the outlines of the characters of the sitting members, that I might know how to behave myself properly. 'Your precaution (said he) is a prudent one, and I will make you so well acquainted with them beforehand, that you shall not seem a stranger when among them. You must know then that our club consists of at least forty members when complete. Of these, many are now in the country; and besides, we have some vacancies which cannot be filled up till next winter. Pulsies and apoplexies have of late, I don't know why, been pretty rife among us, and carried off a good many. It is not above a week ago, that poor Tom Toastwell fell on a sudden under the table, as we thought only a little in drink, but he was carried home, and never spoke more. Those whom you will probably meet with to-day are, first of all, Lord Feeble, a nobleman of admirable sense, a true fine gentleman, and, for a man of quality, a pretty classic. He has lived rather fast formerly, and impaired his constitution by sitting up late, and drinking your thin sharp wines. He is still what you call nervous, which makes him a little low-spirited and reserved at first; but he grows very affable and cheerful as soon as he has warmed his stomach with about a bottle of good claret.

‘ Sir Tunbelly Guzzle is a very worthy north-country baronet, of a good estate, and one who was beforehand in the world, till being twice chosen knight of the shire, and having in consequence got a pretty employment at court, he run out considerably. He has left off housekeeping, and is now upon a retrieving scheme. He is the heartiest, honestest fellow living; and though he is a man of very few words, I can assure you he does not want sense. He had a university education, and has a good notion of the classics. The poor man is confined half the year at least with the gout, and has besides an inveterate scurvy, which I cannot account for: no man can live more regularly; he eats nothing but plain meat, and very little of that: he drinks no thin wines, and never sits up late; for he has his full dose by eleven.

‘ Colonel Culverin is a brave old experienced officer, though but a lieutenant-colonel of foot. Between you and me, he has had great injustice done him, and is now commanded by many who were not born when he first came into the army. He has served in Ireland, Minorca, and Gibraltar; and would have been in all the late battles in Flanders, had the regiment been ordered there. It is a pleasure to hear him talk of war. He is the best-natured man alive, but a little too jealous of his honour, and too apt to be in a passion; but that is soon over, and then he is sorry for it. I fear he is dropsical, which I impute to his drinking your champaigns and burgundies. He got that ill habit abroad.

‘ Sir George Plyant is well born, has a genteel fortune, keeps the very best company, and is to be sure one of the best bred men alive: he is so good-natured, that he seems to have no will of his own. He will drink as little or as much as you please, and no matter of what. He has been a mighty man with

the ladies formerly, and loves the crack of the whip still. He is our news-monger ; for being a gentleman of the privy-chamber, he goes to court every day, and consequently knows pretty well what is going forward there. Poor gentleman ! I fear we shall not keep him long ; for he seems far gone in a consumption, though the doctors say it is only a nervous atrophy.

‘ Will Sitfast is the best natured fellow living, and an excellent companion, though he seldom speaks ; but he is no flincher, and sits every man’s hand out at the club. He is a very good scholar, and can write very pretty Latin verses. I doubt he is in a declining way ; for a paralytic stroke has lately twitched up one side of his mouth so, that he is now obliged to take his wine diagonally. However he keeps up his spirits bravely, and never shams his glass.

‘ Doctor Carbuncle is an honest, jolly, merry parson, well affected to the government, and much of a gentleman. He is the life of our club, instead of being the least restraint upon it. He is an admirable scholar, and I really believe has all Horace by heart ; I know he has him always in his pocket. His red face, inflamed nose, and swelled legs, make him generally thought a hard drinker by those who do not know him ; but I must do him the justice to say, that I never saw him disguised with liquor in my life. It is true, he is a very large man, and can hold a great deal, which makes the colonel call him, pleasantly enough, a vessel of election.

‘ The last and least (concluded my friend) is your humble servant, such as I am ; and if you please we will go and walk in the park till dinner-time.’ I agreed, and we set out together. But here the reader will perhaps expect that I should let him walk on a little, while I give his character. We were of the

same year of St. John's college in Cambridge: he was a younger brother of a good family, was bred to the church, and had just got a fellowship in the college, when his elder brother dying, he succeeded to an easy fortune, and resolved to make himself easy with it, that is, to do nothing. As he had resided long in college, he had contracted all the habits and prejudices, the laziness, the soaking, the pride, and the pedantry of the cloister, which after a certain time are never to be rubbed off. He considered the critical knowledge of the Greek and Latin words as the utmost effort of the human understanding, and a glass of good wine in good company, as the highest pitch of human felicity. Accordingly he passes his mornings in reading the classics, most of which he has long had by heart, and his evenings in drinking his glass of good wine, which, by frequent filling, amounts at least to two, and often to three bottles a day. I must not omit mentioning that my friend is tormented with the stone, which misfortune he imputes to his once having drank water for a month, by the prescription of the late Doctor Cheyne, and by no means to at least two quarts of claret a day, for these last thirty years. To return to my friend: 'I am very much mistaken,' said he, as we were walking in the park, 'if you do not thank me for procuring this day's entertainment: for a set of worthier gentlemen to be sure never lived.' 'I make no doubt of it,' said I, 'and am therefore the more concerned when I reflect that this club of worthy gentlemen might, by your own account, be not improperly called an hospital of incurables, as there is not one among them who does not labour under some chronical and mortal distemper.' 'I see what you would be at,' answered my friend; 'you would insinuate that it is all owing to wine: but let me assure you, Mr. Fitz-Adam,

that wine, especially claret, if neat and good, can hurt no man. I did not reply to this aphorism of my friend, which I knew would draw on too long a discussion, especially as we were just going into the club-room, where I took it for granted that it was one of the great constitutional principles. The account of this modern Symposium shall be the subject of my next paper.

No. 91. THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 26, 1754.

My friend presented me to the company, in what he thought the most obliging manner; but which, I confess, put me a little out of countenance. 'Give me leave, gentlemen,' said he, 'to present to you my old friend Mr. Fitz-Adam, the ingenious author of the *World*.' The word author instantly excited the attention of the whole company, and drew all their eyes upon me: for people who are not apt to write themselves have a strange curiosity to see a *live author*. The gentlemen received me in common, with those gestures that intimate welcome; and I on my part respectfully muttered some of those nothings, which stand instead of the something one should say, and perhaps do full as well.

The weather being hot, the gentlemen were refreshing themselves before dinner with what they called a cool tankard; in which they successively drank to me. When it came to my turn, I thought I could not decently decline drinking the gentlemen's healths, which I did aggregately: but how was I surprised, when upon the first taste I discovered that this cooling and refreshing draught was composed of

the strongest mountain wine, lowered indeed with a very little lemon and water, but then heightened again by a quantity of those comfortable aromatics, nutmeg and ginger! Dinner, which had been called for more than once with some impatience, was at last brought up, upon the colonel's threatening perdition to the master and all the waiters of the house, if it was delayed two minutes longer. We sat down without ceremony, and we were no sooner sat down than every body (except myself) drank every body's health, which made a tumultuous kind of noise. I observed with surprise, that the common quantity of wine was put into glasses of an immense size and weight; but my surprise ceased when I saw the tremulous hands that took them, and for which I supposed they were intended as ballast. But even this precaution did not protect the nose of Doctor Carbuncle from a severe shock, in his attempt to hit his mouth. The colonel, who observed this accident, cried out pleasantly, 'Why, doctor, I find you are but a bad engineer. While you aim at your mouth you will never hit it, take my word for it. A floating battery, to hit the mark, must be pointed something above or below it. If you would hit your mouth, direct your four-pounder at your forehead, or your chin.' The doctor good-humouredly thanked the colonel for the hint, and promised him to communicate it to his friends at Oxford, where, he owned, that he had seen many a good glass of port spilt for want of it. Sir Tunbelly almost smiled, Sir George laughed, and the whole company, somehow or other, applauded this elegant piece of raillery. But alas! things soon took a less pleasant turn; for an enormous buttock of boiled salt beef, which had succeeded the soup, proved not to be sufficiently corned for Sir Tunbelly, who had bespoke it; and at the same time Lord Feeble took a dislike to the

claret, which he affirmed not to be the same which they had drank the day before! it had no *silkiness*, *went rough off the tongue*, and his lordship shrewdly suspected that it was mixed with *Benecarlo*, or *some of those black wines*. This was a common cause, and excited universal attention. The whole company tasted it seriously, and every one found a different fault with it. The master of the house was immediately sent for up, examined, and treated as a criminal. Sir Tunbelly reproached him with the freshness of the beef, while at the same time all the others fell upon him for the badness of his wines, telling him that it was not fit usage for such good customers as they were, and in fine, threatening him with a migration of the club to some other house. The criminal laid the blame of the beef's not being corned enough upon his cook, whom he promised to turn away; and attested heaven and earth that the wine was the very same which they had all approved of the day before; and as he had a soul to be saved, was true *Chateau Margoux*. 'Chateaux devil (said the colonel with warmth), it is your d——d rough *Chaos* wine.' Will Sitfast, who thought himself obliged to articulate upon this occasion, said, he was not sure it was a mixed wine, but that indeed it drank *down*. 'If that is all (interrupted the doctor) let us c'en drink it *up* then. Or, if that won't do, since we cannot have the true *Falernum*, let us take up for once with the *vile Sabinum*. What say you, gentlemen, to good honest port, which I am convinced is a much wholesomer stomach wine?' My friend, who in his heart loves port better than any other wine in the world, willingly seconded the doctor's motion, and spoke very favourably of your *Portingal* wines in general, if neat. Upon this some was immediately brought up, which I observed my friend and the doctor stuck to the whole evening. I could

not help asking the doctor if he really preferred port to lighter wines? To which he answered, 'You know, Mr. Fitz-Adam, that use is second nature: and port is in a manner mother's milk to me; for it is what my *Alma Mater* suckles all her numerous progeny with.' I silently assented to the doctor's account, which I was convinced was a true one, and then attended to the judicious animadversions of the other gentlemen upon the claret, which were still continued, though at the same time they continued to drink it. I hinted my surprise at this to Sir Tunbelly, who gravely answered me, and in a moving way, *Why, what can we do?* 'Not drink it (replied I), since it is not good.' 'But what will you have us do? and how shall we pass the evening?' rejoined the baronet. 'One cannot go home at five o'clock.' 'That depends a great deal upon use,' said I. 'It may be so, to a certain degree,' said the doctor. 'But give me leave to ask you, Mr. Fitz-Adam, you who drink nothing but water, and live much at home, how do you keep up your spirits?' 'Why, doctor,' said I, 'as I never lowered my spirits by strong liquor, I do not want it to raise them.' Here we were interrupted by the colonel's raising his voice and indignation against the burgundy and champagne, swearing that the former was ropy, and the latter upon the fret, and not without some suspicion of cider and sugar-candy; notwithstanding which, he drank, in a bumper of it, confusion to the town of Bristol and the bottle act. It was a shame, he said, that gentlemen could have no good burgundies and champagnes, for the sake of some increase of the revenue, the manufacture of glass bottles, and such sort of stuff. Sir George confirmed the same, adding that it was *scandalous*: and the whole company agreed, that the new parliament would certainly repeal so

absurd an act the very first session ; but if they did not, they hoped they would receive instructions to that purpose from their constituents. ‘ To be sure,’ said the colonel : ‘ What a d——d rout they made about the repeal of the Jew-bill, for which nobody cared one farthing ! But by the way (continued he) I think every body has done eating, and therefore had not we better have the dinner taken away, and the wine set upon the table ?’ To this the company gave an unanimous Ay. While this was doing, I asked my friend, with seeming seriousness, whether no part of the dinner was to be served up again, when the wine should be set upon the table ? He seemed surprised at my question, and asked me if I was hungry ? To which I answered, No ; but asked him in my turn if he was dry ? To which he also answered, No. ‘ Then pray,’ replied I, ‘ why not as well eat without being hungry, as drink without being dry ?’ My friend was so stunned with this, that he attempted no reply, but stared at me with as much astonishment as he would have done at my great ancestor Adam in his primitive state of nature.

The cloth was now taken away, and the bottles, glasses, and dish-clouts put upon the table ; when Will Sitfast, who I found was perpetual toast-maker, took the chair, of course, as the man of application to business. He began the King’s health in a bumper, which circulated in the same manner, not without some nice examinations of the chairman as to *day-light*. The bottle standing by me, I was called upon by the chairman, who added, that though a water-drinker, he hoped I would not refuse that health in wine. I begged to be excused, and told him that I never drank his Majesty’s health at all, though no one of his subjects wished it more heartily than I did : that hitherto it had not appeared to me, that

there could be the least relation between the wine I drank, and the king's state of health ; and that till I was convinced that impairing my own health would improve his Majesty's, I was resolved to preserve the use of my faculties and my limbs, to employ both in his service, if he could ever have occasion for them. I had foreseen the consequences of this refusal ; and though my friend had answered for my principles, I easily discovered an air of suspicion in the countenances of the company ; and I overheard the colonel whisper to Lord Feeble, ' This author is a very odd dog.'

My friend was ashamed of me ; but however, to help me off as well as he could, he said to me aloud, ' Mr. Fitz-Adam, this is one of those singularities which you have contracted by living so much alone.' From this moment the company gave me up to my oddnesses, and took no farther notice of me. I leaned silently upon the table, waiting for (though to say the truth, without expecting) some of that festal gaiety, that urbanity, and that elegant mirth, of which my friend had promised so large a share : instead of all which, the conversation ran chiefly into narrative, and grew duller and duller with every bottle. Lord Feeble recounted his former achievements in love and wine ; the colonel complained, though with dignity, of hardships and injustice ; Sir George hinted at some important discoveries which he had made that day at court, but cautiously avoided naming names ; Sir Tunbelly slept between glass and glass ; the doctor and my friend talked over college matters, and quoted Latin ; and our worthy president applied himself wholly to business, never speaking but to order ; as, ' Sir, the bottle stands with you ; Sir, you are to name a toast ; That has been drank already ; Here, more claret ;' &c.. In the height of all this convivial pleasantry, which I plainly saw was come

to its zenith, I stole away at about nine o'clock, and went home ; where reflections upon the entertainment of the day crowded into my mind, and may perhaps be the subject of some future paper.

No. 92. THURSDAY, OCTOBER 3, 1754.

THE entertainment (I do not say the diversion) which I mentioned in my last paper tumbled my imagination to such a degree, and suggested such a variety of indistinct ideas to my mind, that notwithstanding all the pains I took to sort and digest, I could not reduce them to method : I shall therefore throw them out in this paper without order, and just as they occurred to me.

When I considered that, perhaps, two millions of my fellow-subjects passed two parts in three of their lives in the very same manner in which the worthy members of my friend's club passed theirs, I was at a loss to discover that attractive, irresistible, and invisible charm (for I confess I saw none) to which they so deliberately and assiduously sacrificed their time, their health, and their reason ; till dipping accidentally into Monsieur Pascal, I read upon the subject of hunting the following passage. ' What, unless to drown thought, (says that excellent writer) can make men throw away so much time upon a silly animal, which they might buy much cheaper in the market ? It hinders us from looking into ourselves, which is a view we cannot bear.' That this is often one motive, and sometimes the only one of hunting, I can easily believe. But then it must be allowed too, that if the jolly sportsman, who thus vigorously runs away

from himself, does not break his neck in his flight, he improves his health, at least, by his exercise. But what other motive can possibly be assigned for the Soaker's daily and seriously swallowing his own destruction, except that of 'drowning thought, and hindering him from looking into himself, which is a view he cannot bear?'

Unhappy the man who cannot willingly and frequently converse with himself; but miserable in the highest degree is the man who dares not. In one of these predicaments must that man be, who soaks and sleeps away his whole life. Either tired of himself for want of any reflections at all, or dreading himself for fear of the most tormenting ones, he flies for refuge from his folly or his guilt to the company of his fellow-sufferers; or to the intoxication of strong liquors.

Archbishop Tillotson asserts, and very truly, that no man can plead in defence of swearing that he was born of a swearing constitution. I believe the same thing may with equal truth be affirmed of drinking. No man is born a drinker. Drinking is an acquired, not a natural vice. The child, when he first tastes strong liquors, rejects them with evident signs of disgust; but is insensibly brought first to bear, and then perhaps to like them, by the folly of his parents, who promise them as an encouragement, and give them as a reward.

When the coroner's inquest examines the body of one of those unhappy wretches who drown themselves in a pond or river, with commonly a provision of lead in their pockets, to make the work the surer, the verdict is either *felo de se*, or lunacy. Is it then the water, or the suddenness of the plunge, that constitutes either the madness or the guilt of the act? Is there any difference between a water and a wine suicide? If there be, it is evidently in favour of the former,

which is never so deliberate and premeditated as the latter. The Soaker jogs on with a gentler pace indeed, but to as sure and certain destruction ; and as a proof of his intention, would, I believe, upon examination, be generally found to have a good deal of lead about him too. He cannot allege in his defence, that he has not warning ; since he daily sees, in the chronical distempers of all his fellow Soakers, the fatal effects of that slow poison which he so greedily guzzles : for I defy all the *honest gentlemen*, that is, all the hard drinkers in England (a numerous body I doubt) to produce me one single instance of a Soaker, whose health and faculties are not visibly impaired by drinking. Some indeed, born much stronger than others, hold it out longer, and are absurdly quoted as living proofs even of the salutary effects of drinking : but though they have not yet any of the most distinguished characteristics of their profession about them ; though they have not yet lost one half of themselves by a hemiplegia, nor the use of all their limbs by the gout ; though they are but moderately mangy, and though the impending dropsy may not yet appear ; I will venture to affirm that the health they boast of is at best but an awkward state between sickness and health : if they are not actually sick, they are not actively well ; and you will always find some complaint or other inadvertently drop from the triumphant Soaker, within half an hour after he has assured you that he is neither *sick nor sorry*. My wife, who is a little superstitious, and perhaps too apt to point out and interpret judgments, (otherwise an excellent woman) firmly believes, that the dropsy, of which most Soakers finally die, is a manifest and just judgment upon them ; the wine they so much loved being turned into water, and themselves drowned at last in the element they so much abhorred.

A rational and sober man, invited by the wit and gaiety of good company, and hurried away by an uncommon flow of spirits, may happen to drink too much, and perhaps accidentally to get drunk; but then these sallies will be short, and not frequent. Whereas the Soaker is an utter stranger to wit and mirth, and no friend to either. His business is serious, and he applies himself seriously to it; he steadily pursues the numbing, stupifying, and petrifying, not the animating and exhilarating qualities of the wine. Gallons of the Nepenthe would be lost upon him. The more he drinks the duller he grows: his politics become more obscure, and his narratives more tedious and less intelligible: till at last maudlin, he employs what little articulation he has left in relating his doleful tale to an insensible audience. I fear my countrymen have been too long noted for this manner of drinking, since a very old and eminent French historian, speaking of the English, who were then in possession of Aquitain, the promised land of claret, says, *Ils se saoulerent grandement, et se divertirent moult tristement à la mode de leur pais.*

A very skilful surgeon of my acquaintance assured me, that having opened the body of a Soaker, who died of an apoplexy, he had found all the finer tubes and vessels plugged up with the tartar of the wine he had swallowed, so as to render the circulation of the blood absolutely impossible; and the folds of the stomach so stiffened with it, that it could not perform its functions. He compared the body of the deceased to a siphon so choked up with the tartar and dregs of the wine that had run through it, as to be impervious. I adopted this image, which seemed to me a just one: and I shall for the future typify the Soaker by the Siphon, suction being equally the only business of both.

An object, viewed at once, and in its full extent, will sometimes strike the mind, when the several parts and gradations of it, separately seen, would be but little attended to. I shall therefore here present the society of Siphons with a calculation, of which they cannot dispute the truth, and will not, I believe, deny the moderation; and yet perhaps they will be surprised when they see the gross sums of the wine they suck, of the money they pay for it, and of the time they lose in the course of seven years only.

I reckon that I put a stanch Siphon very low, when I put him only at two bottles a day, one day with another. This in seven years amounts to four thousand four hundred and ten bottles, which make twenty hogsheads and seventy bottles.

Supposing this quantity to cost only four shillings a bottle, which I take to be the lowest price of claret, the sum amounts to eight hundred and eighty-two pounds.

Allowing every Siphon but six hours a day to suck his two bottles in, which is a short allowance, that time amounts to six hundred and thirty-eight days, eighteen hours; one full quarter of his life, for the above-mentioned seven years. Can any rational being coolly consider these three gross sums, of wine, and consequently distempers swallowed, of money lavished, and time lost, without shame, regret, and a resolution of reformation?

I am well aware that the numerous society of Siphons will say, like Sir Tunbelly, What would this fellow have us do? To which I am at no loss for an answer. Do any thing else. Preserve and improve that reason which was given you to be your guide through this world, and to a better. Attend to, and discharge your religious, your moral, and your social duties. These are occupations worthy

of a rational being: they will agreeably and usefully employ your time, and will banish from your breasts that tiresome listlessness, or those tormenting thoughts, from which you endeavour, though in vain, to fly. Is your retrospect uncomfortable? Exert yourselves in time to make your prospect better; and let the former serve as a back-ground to the latter. Cultivate and improve your minds with reading, according to your several educations and capacities. There are several useful books suited to them all. True religion and virtue give a cheerful and happy turn to the mind, admit of all true pleasures, and even procure the truest.

Cantabrigius drinks nothing but water, and rides more miles in a year than the keenest sportsman, and with almost equal velocity. The former keeps his head clear, the latter his body in health. It is not from himself that he runs, but to his acquaintance, a synonymous term for his friends. Internally safe, he seeks no sanctuary from himself, no intoxication for his mind. His penetration makes him discover and divert himself with the follies of mankind, which his wit enables him to expose with the truest ridicule, though always without personal offence. Cheerful abroad, because happy at home, and thus happy, because virtuous.

* * * *I am obliged to many correspondents for letters, which, though hitherto unnoticed, will be published with all convenient speed.*

No. 93. THURSDAY, OCTOBER 10, 1754.

It is a very true, though a very trite principle, ‘ that the point of perfection is at a middle distance between the two extremes ;’ and whoever is the least conversant with the world will have frequent opportunities of convincing himself of its importance, whether he applies it to the morals, manners, or other objects of human action.

I shall make it the subject of this day’s paper to particularize the danger of passing too precipitately from one extreme to the other, in an instance which I conceive to be of very material consequence to the entertainment, instruction, and virtue of mankind.

The distinguishing characteristic of the last age was pedantry. Every man appeared so sensibly convinced of the dignity and usefulness of his own profession, that he considered it as the only one meriting the attention of reasonable creatures, and, wherever he was admitted, introduced it as such, without the least regard to times, persons, or places. It was impossible to sit half an hour with the man of learning, without discovering his contempt for every kind of discourse that was not tinctured, like his own, with the sentiments and language of Aristotle or Plato. Divines were apt but too often to perplex the heads of young ladies at tea-tables with school distinctions, and the depths of metaphysics ; and such jargon terms as *capias*’s, *certiorari*’s, and *premunire facias*’s, were more frequently the expressions of lawyers in the same company, than love and adoration, the natural language of the place. A military man no sooner entered the room, than you associated

the discharge of artillery with his appearance. The authority of his voice silenced every milder subject of conversation, and the battles of Blenheim and Ramillies, so fatal to the enemy, were fought over again in very turbulent description, to the no small terror of his peaceable countrymen.

The wits of those times very finely rallied this foible; and it has indeed suffered such discouragement in our days, that an absurdity, the very reverse, though less to be justified, has succeeded in its place: I mean, a vicious affectation, in the present age, of avoiding that pedantry which so distinguished the preceding one.

This affectation has been pursued to such lengths, that a person is esteemed very deficient in good breeding who ventures to explain himself on any subject, however naturally it may arise in company, which genius, education, and his particular profession, have qualified him to support. As a man of the world, he will divert the discourse to any other subject, which, being entirely unacquainted with, he is secure of treating in a manner altogether removed from pedantry. It is principally from this cause, that conversation, which formerly was the means of communicating knowledge with the freedom and delicacy peculiar to it, and which rendered the groves of Academus, the porches of Lycæum, and the walks of Tusculum famous to posterity, is degenerating into an useless and insipid intercourse: while the most trifling amusements that relieve us from the anxiety of it receive all our encouragement.

It is indeed no wonder that clubs and other ancient meetings for society are growing out of fashion, when punctilio not only obliges you to be silent on those topics, which you are inclined, from your knowledge of them, to enter upon with freedom; but sub-

jects you to the mortification of hearing them discussed by persons who never talked or thought of them till the present moment. The situation of the speaker too, in such assemblies, can be no very desirable one, while he is voluntarily imposing the necessity on himself of attempting a subject, when unprovided with materials for it.

This custom is in no sort confined to mixed companies, where possibly some faint excuses might be offered for it; but operates equally where men of the same profession are collected, who, to avoid seeming pedants in the eyes of each other, prefer obscenity, impertinence, or absurdity, to a conversation calculated to reflect mutual light on those studies, which, either in speculation or practice, are the employment of their lives.

A very understanding friend of mine, who, till within this month, has not visited London for five-and-twenty years, was lamenting to me seriously the declension of knowledge in this kingdom, and seemed apprehensive that a country so distinguished for many ages was relapsing again into its ancient barbarity. I was somewhat surprised at the peculiarity of his sentiments, but did not remain long unacquainted with the cause of them. It seems my friend had spent the greatest part of that week in very different sets of company. He had dined in the beginning of it at a visitation, where the British herring fishery, and some proposals respecting the public debt, had very warmly interested the upper part of the table. He was the less in humour to relish this dispute, as he had been kept up till three that very morning, in the neighbourhood of the exchange, as moderator in a controversy on foreknowledge and free-will. The next day, in Lincoln's-Inn hall, he was not a little perplexed with

the variety of opinions on the circulation of the blood, the production of chyle, and the powers of digestion. It was his fortune afterwards to be present at Batson's coffee-house, when the disposition of the German army at the battle of Crotka, and the last siege of Coni, were severely arraigned; and to listen at the Tilt-yard to many objections against a decree in chancery, and to a discourse employed to ascertain the provinces of reason, law, and equity. His greatest mortification was in an admittance that morning to a junto of statesmen near Whitehall, from whom nothing transpired, after two hours attention to them, except some injudicious, though modest conjectures, on the future sport of Newmarket races.

It was easy for me, after this explanation, to account for the indifferent opinion my friend had conceived of the divinity, law, and physic; the politics, military knowledge, and trade of the present times; and yet, from my acquaintance with the characters he had seen, I may venture to assert, what in another age might have the appearance of a paradox, that he had been conversing with the most eminent divines, lawyers, and physicians; with the ablest statesmen, skilfullest commanders, and most intelligent traders of any age or country.

This humour, it is to be feared, will by degrees infect the pen as well as the tongue; and that we shall have apothecaries advertising comments on Machiavel's art of war, and serjeants at law taking in subscriptions for systems of chemistry, and dissertations on midwifery. Every man's experience will probably inform him that it has already extended itself to epistolary writing. I have a late disagreeable instance of it in my own family: it is in a young gentleman, who left England with the highest reputation, about a twelvemonth since, to make what is called the tour of Europe. He parted from me

with a promise of writing from Rome, where he proposed to continue some time, after visiting France, and the principal cities of Italy. As I had formed very agreeable expectations from this correspondence, I must confess my disappointment when his letter arrived. He never mentioned France, but to condemn the post-horses ; nor took notice of any circumstance in his passage over the Alps, except the loss of his hat and periwig. One would have concluded him a cheesemonger from his description of Parma. His observations on Florence were confined solely to its wines : and though he was profoundly silent on the constitution of Lucca, he talked very particularly of the olives it produced. He had occasionally interspersed some anecdotes of himself : as that he had drank a little too freely at Genoa with Lord A. ; that he had broke the west window of the great church at Milan in a frolic with Sir Thomas B. ; that he had been plundered of his gold watch and snuff-box by a courtesan of Venice ; and that he had attempted, in revenge, to sink a gondola belonging to the Doge. These singular contents really gave me pain, as I had a sincere affection for my cousin and his family ; and I began to moralize on the vanity and misapplication of travelling into foreign countries. A packet of letters, which reached me soon after, from other correspondents at that time in Italy, threw me into new perplexities : for they all concurred in representing my relation as doing honour to his country by his genius and learning. They spoke of him as distinguished for his knowledge of the religion, government, and antiquities of the states he had visited ; and described him as little less remarkable for his chastity, sobriety, and gentleness of manners. A disagreement so visible between the letter from himself, and those which succeeded it, was at first indeed not easily reconciled. Being satisfied, however, that my intel-

ligence from the latter might be relied on as certain, I at length made a discovery, that my cousin had departed from his veracity on this occasion; and that he had assumed a character compounded of folly, ignorance, and debauchery, to which he had no pretensions: preferring it to that of a gentleman, a scholar, and a man of virtue, which really belonged to him, from a studious affectation of appearing to his friend in any other light than the unfashionable one of a Pedant.

* * * *In answer to Hillaria and her cousin, I am sorry to say that it is not my good fortune to be the gentleman who has attracted their notice.*

No. 94. THURSDAY, OCTOBER 17, 1754.

IN my paper of last Thursday, I took notice how much conversation had suffered from the singular disposition of mankind in our age to appear in every character except their natural one, and to consider Pedantry as reflecting more disgrace on the persons tinctured with it, than any other frailty, or even immorality, incident to our nature. I am, however, far from concluding this principle (universal as it is) to be the only obstruction to rational society: other causes, distinct in themselves, or operating in conjunction with it, have conspired to reduce conversation to the state we lament it in at present. I shall mention the most remarkable of these causes in the order they occur to me.

One great abuse of conversation has visibly arisen from our mistaking its end, which is, the mutual

entertainment and instruction of each other by a friendly communication of sentiments. It is seriously to be wished that this end were pursued, and that every one would contribute with freedom and good manners to the general improvement from his particular discoveries. On the contrary, we are apt to consider society in no other light than as it gives us an opportunity of displaying to advantage our wit, our eloquence, or any other real or imaginary accomplishment. It is our intention to procure admiration from it, not improvement, and to dazzle our companions with our own brightness, rather than to receive light by reflection from them. I knew indeed an instance, the very opposite to this, in a late person of distinction, who to very great qualities had united the talents of a most agreeable companion. I could never perceive that he supported this character by any assumed superiority over his company: it was his singular faculty to discover the genius of other men: no latent merit escaped his penetration, though the proprietor seemed industrious to conceal it from the world, and even from himself. With this advantage he had the art to engage every member of the company on that particular subject, which he was capable of maintaining with ease to himself, and benefit to society. He himself, at the same time, pretended to no more than a common part in that conversation, which derived its merit entirely from his address. The tendency of such behaviour to enlarge knowledge, as well as to procure esteem, cannot fail of appearing very evident to my readers.

There is another defect, very closely connected with the abuse above-mentioned, which has proved equally pernicious to conversation: I mean the peremptoriness and warmth that are employed in modern conferences. Indeed, whether we write or converse, the haughty manner, the self-sufficiency, and

the contempt of our opponent that we mix with our arguments, have considerably prevented the advancement of truth, and conviction of error. Modern disputants by this method have subjected their cause, though perhaps founded in demonstration, to great disadvantages; since they have not only the prejudices of mankind to combat, but have imprudently interested their passions too against them. In debates perhaps purely speculative, a person is obliged not only to defend the point in controversy, but even his understanding and moral character, which are united to the question by the management of his adversary. Sir Isaac Newton and Mr. Locke, ornaments to their country, their age, and human nature, have been frequently represented as men of weak heads and bad hearts, by persons esteeming themselves nothing less than philosophers. It does not indeed appear to the unprejudiced, that gravitation and cohesion have any visible connexion with ethics; that an attempt to ascertain the powers of the understanding has a tendency to undermine revelation; or that these writers deserved to be considered in any other light than as ingenious enthusiasts, if reason and universal experience had not confirmed their inquiries to be as true as they were beautiful. I have often thought that the reception of the Platonic philosophy in the world may be attributed more to the manner of its delivery, than to the superior excellence of it. If we except the moral part, which is divinely treated, its discoveries in physics and other branches of science did not entitle it to be advanced above that of other sects, particularly the Aristotelian. The difference was, that the *ipse dixits* and dogmatical positions of the one, made it unpalatable; while modesty, politeness, and deference to the reason and dignity of mankind, rendered the other lovely even to its adversaries. They

were induced, by the address of it, to pursue the consequences of their own opinions till they led them to absurdity, and were not ashamed of a conclusion which seemed to be the effect of their own examination. The same management inclined them to adopt with cheerfulness those principles which were established on the ruins of their favourite prejudices. It is a little extraordinary that the success of this milder method of disputation should have had no greater influence on succeeding ages; especially since the Divine Founder of Christianity has, by his own example, so eminently recommended the same practice. The errors of mankind were treated by him with the tenderness of a parent; and even divine truths introduced into the mind by persuasion rather than authority. The delivery of them in parables was excellently calculated to divest men of prejudices and passions, and to exclude the consideration of self-interest from the question; at the same time that it showed an indulgence to the understanding, by proposing chiefly general truths, and leaving their particular application to ourselves.

The fatal influence of politics on society, in a country divided into parties like our own, has been too often mentioned to require illustration. I shall observe only, that it has been the occasion of excluding a variety of useful knowledge from conversation, even with men of the most moderate principles. They have been cautious of engaging on any subject, which might accidentally lead to that of politics; and from the natural relation of one science to another, have by this means precluded themselves from almost every branch of instructive conversation. It was observable at the table of a late great man, that obscenity was too often the subject of discourse, which he himself appeared not sufficiently to discountenance. To some

serious persons, who took offence at his conduct, he made the following apology: 'I have attempted,' says he, 'in vain to start other subjects, and at the same time to preserve the harmony of my company. If, for instance, I introduce the state of ancient and modern learning, we enter very soon into a comparison of the governments they have flourished under, to the disadvantage of the present one, and the persons that conduct it. If the subject has been philosophy, I have sometimes apprehended that it would conclude with laying hands on the hilts of swords, from divisions on toleration, and occasional conformity. I am therefore under the necessity of conniving at a subject, in which alone whig and tory, churchman and dissenter, ministerial and anti-ministerial man unite together, with any degree of cheerfulness.'

Another impediment to the revival of conversation may be ascribed to our notion of its being intended as a relaxation from every thing serious, useful, or moral. The mind has been compared to a bow, which is sometimes unbent to preserve its elasticity; and because the bow is useless in a state of remission, we make the same conclusion of the human mind. Whereas the mind is an active principle, and naturally impatient of ease; it may lose indeed its vigour by being employed too intensely on particular subjects, but recovers itself again, rather by varying its application, than by continuing inactive. History, poetry, and the lighter parts of science, more agreeably relieve us from abstracted studies, than a total indolence and dissipation. It is this continued, though varied exercise of the mind, in the hours of leisure as well as of business, that seems to have given the ancients that superiority over the moderns, which we are more ready to acknowledge, than to inquire into the reason of. Even Tully himself, if he had dedicated his retirement to those amusements that em-

ploy the modern world, might have been delivered to posterity with no greater reputation, than what he was entitled to from the character of an eminent pleader and politician. It was in that retirement, and in the hours of conversation, that he exhausted those subjects of reason and philosophy, which have rendered him the admiration of mankind. I was engaged lately in conversation with some friends on a particular branch of writing, that of dialogue. Every one admired the ease of the ancients in it, and condemned the moderns as stiff and unnatural. I agreed in opinion with them, but thought their reflections as much a satire on the age as the writers. Modern dialogue appears unnatural, because the scenes, the persons, and the subjects it associates, are seldom united in real life. It was natural for an ancient writer to represent Varro, Atticus, Brutus, &c. discussing subjects of the utmost importance to mankind in porticoes or gardens, because the great men of Rome frequently spent their retirement in this manner. It would seem the very reverse to introduce in our days Sir Thomas requesting my lord duke to resume his arguments for the immateriality of the soul under the shade of a beech-tree, or entreating him to penetrate into the recesses of the wood, that he may pursue without interruption his inquiry into the foundation of morality. The reason is, that disquisitions of this kind do not frequently engage the thoughts of our great men : or if they really think of them, they appropriate thinking to the particular apartments they call their studies. When they chance to penetrate into the gloom of woods, it is in pursuit of game, not of truth. The conversation in gardens is not often of an elevated kind ; and the circular seats round spreading trees usually inspire other thoughts than abstracted ideas.

I shall close this subject with lamenting the injury

done to society by our unnatural exclusion of the softer sex from every conversation either serious or instructive. The most enlightened ages of the world entertained juster notions of their merit: even Socrates, the father of ancient wisdom, was fond of acknowledging that he had learnt eloquence from Aspasia. I may add of the sex, that they derive some advantage over us from the very defects of their education: their minds operate with more freedom, and with the genuine simplicity of uncorrupted nature. They are not fettered, like ours, by principles and systems, nor confined to the particular modes of thinking, that prevail in colleges and schools. The liveliness too of their imagination entitles them to a place in the gravest, as well as the most cheerful company; I will not even except the Symposia of philosophers: for, to conclude a little learnedly, though demonstration itself may appear principally to depend on the judgment, yet the discovery of intermediate ideas, necessary to it, is more particularly the province of invention.

No. 95. THURSDAY, OCTOBER 24, 1754.

—— *Medio tutissimus ibis.*

OVID.

TO MR. FITZ-ADAM.

SIR,

THE golden mean, or middle track of life, has always been esteemed the best, because it is the happiest: and I believe, upon inquiry, it will be found to be the happiest, because the people so situated are the wisest part of mankind; and being the wisest, are best able to subdue those turbulent passions which are the greatest enemies to happiness.

But has not a man of the first rank and fortune a greater opportunity, in proportion to that fortune, to acquire knowledge, than a man in middling circumstances? Most certainly he has; and I make no doubt but that persons of the first quality would be persons of the first understanding, if it was not for one very material obstacle, I mean *fashion*. There are no two characters so entirely incompatible as a man of sense and a man of fashion. A man of fashion must devote his whole time to the fashionable pleasures: among the first of these may be reckoned gaming, in the pursuit of which we cannot allow him less than a third part of the twenty-four hours; and the other sixteen (allowing for a little sleep) are to be spent in amusements, perhaps less vicious, but not more profitable.

I would not here be understood to mean, that every man of quality is a man of fashion; on the contrary, I know several whose titles serve to make their merits more conspicuous: but I cannot help

observing, that the noble lord who holds the first place amongst the men of wit and genius has not been known to alter the cock of his little hat for above these twenty years.

If we consider the lowest class of life but for a moment, we shall not be at a loss to account for their ignorance. They have little more time from their labour than what is necessary for refreshment. They work to supply their own necessities, and the luxuries of the great. Let us examine how far these two extremes of life resemble each other in their recreations and diversions. John Slaughter, the butcher, trots his goose-rumped mare twelve miles within the hour for twenty guineas. My lord rides his own horse a match for five hundred. Two bricklayers' labourers play at all-fours in an ale-house on a Saturday night for their week's wages. His grace and Count Basset are doing the same thing at White's for all they are worth in the world. My lord, having been unfortunate in an amour, sends to the doctor at Whitehall. Tom Errand, in the same dilemma, runs away to the licentiate upon Ludgate-hill. In their taste too they are the same. It is common in our theatres for the plaudits to come at one and the same time from the boxes and the upper gallery. In their plurality of wives and mistresses, in their non-observance of religious ceremonies, and in many other particulars, which I shall forbear to mention, they seem entirely to agree.

For my own part, I imbibed early the love of mediocrity; and I find it growing upon me as I increase in years; insomuch that my discourse, let the subject be what it will, is generally tinged with it. Nay, I am even afraid, Mr. Fitz-Adam, when I tell you some little anecdotes of my life, that you will accuse me of running into the extreme, by adhering too closely and circumstantially to the

medium. For example: I gave more for my chambers than I need to have done, because I would have them in the Middle Temple, a situation very agreeable to me, as lying in the midway between the city and the court. I have never thought myself so happy at the playhouse, since Burton's box was taken down, though I always sit in the centre of the middle gallery. And to tell you the truth, I have often wished myself shorter, because I am somewhat above the middle stature.

This particular way of thinking very frequently subjects me to little rudenesses and affronts. It was but t'other night that a young gentleman of our inn, who aspires at being lord chancellor, wished me in the middle of a horse-pond for dwelling perhaps a little too long on the happiness of a middle state; and it is no new thing to me at Nando's to overhear the smarts, at my entrance into that coffee-house, crying out, 'Here comes old Medium.'

These, Mr. Fitz-Adam, are disagreeable things; but then I have the self-satisfaction of knowing that I am in the right. But I trespass on your patience, and besides, have made my letter longer than I intended: I shall therefore conclude abruptly with that excellent wish of Agar, 'Give me neither poverty nor riches.'

I am, &c.

By way of supplement to the above, and to illustrate, by example, the absurdity of running into extremes, I shall present my readers with another letter, which I received some time ago from a female correspondent.

MR. FITZ-ADAM,

I am an humble cousin to two sisters, who though they are good-humoured, good sort of people, and (all things considered) behave to me tolerably well, yet their manners and dispositions are so extremely opposite, that the task of pleasing them is rendered very difficult and troublesome. The eldest of my cousins is a very jolly free-hearted girl, and so great an enemy to all kinds of form, that you seldom see her with so much as a pin in her gown; while the youngest, who thinks in her heart that her sister is no better than a slattern, runs into the contrary extreme, and is, in every thing she does, an absolute fidfad. She takes up almost as much time to put on a gown, as her sister does to dirty one. The eldest is too thoughtless to remember what she is to do, and the youngest is so tedious in doing it, that the time is always elapsed in which it was necessary for it to be done. If you lend any thing to the eldest, you are sure to have it lost; or if you would borrow any thing of the youngest, it is odds but she refuses it, from an opinion that you will be less careful of it than herself. Whatever work is done by one sister, is too slight to hang together for an hour's wear; and whatever is undertaken by the other, is generally too nice and curious to be finished.

As they are constantly bed-fellows, the first sleep of the eldest is sure to be broke by the youngest, whose usual time for undressing and folding up her clothes is at least an hour and a half, allowing a third part of that time for hindrances, occasioned by her elder sister's things, which lie scattered every where in her way.

If they had lovers, Mr. Fitz-Adam, I know exactly how it would be: the eldest would lose hers by saying Yes too soon, and the youngest by saying No too often. If they were wives, the one would be too

hasty to do any thing right, and the other too tedious to do any thing pleasing: or were they mothers, the daughters of the eldest would be playing at taw with the boys, and the sons of the youngest dressing dolls with the misses.

I wish, Mr. Fitz-Adam, that you would be so kind to these cousins of mine as to favour them with your advice. I have told you already, that they are both good humoured; and if you could prevail upon the eldest to borrow from the youngest a little thought and neatness, and upon the youngest to add to her exactness a little of the careless freedom of the eldest, you would make them very amiable women, and me the happiest of all humble cousins.

I am, sir,

Your constant reader,
and most humble servant,
M. A.

No. 96. THURSDAY, OCTOBER 31, 1754.

I WAS not a little surprised the other day at receiving a letter by the penny-post, acquainting me that notwithstanding all I had said in a former paper concerning the general reformation that had taken place by means of these essays, there were people amongst us who were taking pains to undo all I had done; and that unless I exerted myself notably on a new occasion, my labours for the good of mankind would fall short of their intention. The writer of this letter proceeds to inform me, that he has lately

obtained a sight of a dramatic manuscript (taken, as he supposes, from a history in Machiavel) called *Belphegor*, or the *Married Devil*, which manuscript, he is credibly assured, is intended to be offered at one of the theatres this very season. My correspondent inveighs greatly against the evil tendency of this piece, of which he has sent me a short transcript, entreating my publication of it, as a warning to the managers against consenting to its exhibition. The transcript, which consists only of one short scene, together with the introduction, is exactly as follows:

Belphegor, a heathen devil, in the disguise of christian flesh and blood, makes his entrance upon the stage; where, after a clap of thunder, and several flashes of lightning, another devil of a smaller size, dressed like a lacquey, in a flame-coloured livery, trimmed with black, and stuck round with fire-works, rises from a trap-door, delivers a letter to *Belphegor*, and, making a very low bow, descends in thunder and lightning as he rose. *Belphegor* then comes forward, and reads the letter, which contains these words:

‘Forasmuch as our true and trusty devil and cousin, *Belphegor*, hath, in obedience to our commands, submitted himself to the torments of the married state for one whole year upon earth, thereby to instruct us in the nature of wives, and to get remission of punishment for all husbands in these our realms; and We, well knowing the many miseries he hath endured in this his state of flesh, and being graciously pleased to release him from his bondage, have ordered that the earth do open at six in the evening of this present day, to re-admit him to our dominions. Given at our palace, &c.

PLUTO.

Belphegor expresses great joy at reading the letter: and while he is thanking *Pluto* for his clemency, and congratulating himself that his deliverance is near at hand, *Harlequin* enters at the back of the stage, looking very disconsolately, and bowing to *Belphegor*, who, after surveying him with wonder, exclaims as follows:

Bel. Hey-day! Who, in the name of Proserpine, have we here? Some other devil upon a frolic too, I suppose? He looks plaguy discontented. If thou art a devil, speak to me. (*Harlequin shakes his head*). A Frenchman, I presume: but then he would have found his tongue sooner. Are you married, friend?

Har. A very miserable fellow, sir.

Bel. Why, ay; that sounds a little like matrimony. But who are you? For by the knave's look, and the fool's coat, you should be some extraordinary personage.

Har. I could eat a little, sir.

Bel. Very likely, friend. But who are you, I say?

Har. A poor *Harlequin*, sir; married yesterday, and now running away from my wife.

Bel. A *Harlequin*! What's that?

Har. Were you never at the playhouse, sir? A *Harlequin* is a man of wit without words; his business is to convey moral sentiments with a nod of the head, or a shake of the nether parts—I'll show you after dinner, if you please, sir.

[*Belphegor waves his hand, and a table rises with provision and wine.*]

Har. Sir, your most humble servant. If it was not for hunger, now, I should beg leave to ask, sir, if you are not the devil? [*Sits down and eats.*]

Bel. A devil that will do you no harm, friend.

Har. But are you really the devil, sir?

Bel. Have you any objection, Mr. *Harlequin*?

Har. None in the least, sir; it is not my way to object to trifles. Sir, my humble duty to you. (*Drinks*). Yes, yes, sir, you must be the devil, or some such great person. And pray, sir, if one may make bold to ask, how go matters below, sir? I suppose you have a world of fine company there. But I am afraid, sir, the place is a little too smoky for the ladies.

Bel. To those who have not been used to town indeed——

Har. To be sure, sir, the town is a very natural preparation. You live pretty much as we do, I suppose?

Bel. Pretty much so, as to the pleasures of the place; rather less scandal among us.

Har. And more sinning, perhaps?

Bel. Very little difference as to that: hypocrisy we have none of: people of fashion, you know, are above hypocrisy; and we are chiefly people of fashion.

Har. No doubt, sir. A good many new-comers I reckon from England?

Bel. A good many, friend; we are particularly fond of the English.

Har. You have them of all professions, I presume?

Bel. Lawyers we do not admit. They are good sort of people in general, and take great pains to come among us; but I don't know how it is, we are apt to be jealous of them, I think—and so they go a little lower down.

Har. Divines of all religions, I suppose?

Bel. Rather of no religion, friend; of those we have abundance; and very much respected they are indeed.

Har. Physicians too, no doubt?

Bel. And that's a little odd; for we have no deaths among us; and yet there is no country under heaven, I believe, so stocked with physicians as ours.

Har. And traders, pray?

Bel. A world of them, of the better sort. The industry and wealth of those gentlemen will always secure them a warm place with us.

Har. Atheists I suppose in plenty?

Bel. Atheists! Not that I remember. We have abundance of fine gentlemen; but I never heard that they professed atheism below.

Har. And pray, sir, do any of the players make you a visit?

Bel. I never heard that they went any where else. They are a little unmanagable, indeed; but we have them all, from Roscius of Rome, to Joe Miller of Drury Lane: and a fine company they are. Besides, we have all the wits that ever wrote; and then we have no licencer to be a check upon their fancies; though I don't remember that lewdness has been carried a degree farther than with you.

Har. Very likely, sir. But pray, sir, if I may be indulged, who are your favourite ladies at present?

Bel. Why, indeed, among so large a number, it is hard to say which. The nuns of all nations are reckoned mighty good sort of women; but a devil of true taste will tell you that a thorough-bred English woman of quality will go beyond them.

Har. You are pleased to compliment the English ladies, sir. And what extraordinary business, if I may have leave to ask, may have been the occasion of this visit?

Bel. Curiosity and a wife: the very two things that send you gentlemen upon a visit to us.

Har. May be so. And pray, sir, what stay do you intend to make?

Bel. Only this evening.

Har. Can I do you any service, sir?

Bel. Ay; you shall make love to my wife.

Har. Her ladyship is from hell too, I suppose?

Bel. Going thither as fast as she can, Mr. Harlequin——But I hear her coming; walk this way, and I'll instruct you. [*Exeunt.*

Thus ends the scene; which my correspondent inveighs against with so much bitterness, that when I consider it throughout, I am almost of opinion that (in the fashionable phrase) he is *taking me in*, and that he has desired my publication of it in order to excite curiosity, and to get the piece talked of before its appearance upon the stage. And indeed this method of puffing by abuse is frequently the most successful of any; for as in these very reformed times a wicked book is so rare to be met with, people will be tempted to read it, out of mere curiosity.

I remember a very sceptical pamphlet, that was nowhere to be seen but in the bookseller's shop, till the author bethought himself of selecting the most offensive passages of it, and by printing them in the *Daily Advertiser*, and calling upon the clergy to confute, and the magistrate to suppress so pernicious a performance, he carried it through three impressions in less than a fortnight. If my present correspondent has adopted this plan, I shall take care to counterwork his design, by giving it as my opinion that the above scene (however it may be objected to by people of a particular turn) is perfectly harmless.

No. 97. THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 7, 1754.

THE following letter is written with such an air of truth, that though it comes from one of those unhappy creatures who have always a story to tell in palliation of their infamy, I cannot refuse giving it a place in this paper. If the artifice that undid this poor girl be a common one, it may possibly be less practised by being more known. All I shall say farther is, that I have made no other alteration in the letter than to correct false spellings and a few errors in the English.

TO MR. FITZ-ADAM.

SIR,

I am the daughter of very honest and reputable parents in the north of England; but as an account of my family does no way relate to my story, I shall avoid troubling you with any farther particulars on that head. At the age of seventeen I had leave from my father and mother to accompany a neighbouring family of some distinction to town, having lived in the strictest intimacy with the young ladies of that family ever since I was a child.

At our arrival in town, we were visited by a great deal of company, and among the rest by a young gentleman of fortune, who seldom passed a day without seeing us. As this gentleman's family, and that of my friends, had been long acquainted, his admission to us was without the least ceremony; and indeed he was looked upon by the young ladies and myself rather as a brother than a visitor. I had often observed, and I confess with a secret satisfaction, that

his behaviour to me, especially when alone, was somewhat more particular than to any of my companions: and I could not help placing it to his favourable opinion of me, that he was continually contriving parties abroad to amuse and entertain us.

One afternoon, having been troubled with the head-ache in the morning, and having therefore excused myself from dining and supping out with the family where I lived, he called, as he had many times done, to ask us to the play. I expressed my concern at the ladies being from home, but foolishly suffered myself to be persuaded to go alone with him into the gallery, after having been laughed at for my objections, and told that I ought to have a better opinion of him than to think him capable of asking me to do an improper thing.

When the play was over, we took coach to return home; but the coachman, having no doubt received his lesson, stopped just at the door of a tavern, telling us that one of the traces was broke, and that he could go no farther. I suffered myself to be handed into the tavern, while another coach was called, which not being immediately to be had, my companion observed to me, smiling, that it was a happy accident, and as the family I lived with would not sup at home, I should be his guest that evening; and without waiting for a reply, ordered supper and a bottle of champagne. It was in vain that I remonstrated against this proposal; he knew, he said, that my friends would not return till twelve; and there could be no kind of harm in eating a bit of chicken, and drinking a glass of wine where we were. I was frightened at the thoughts of what I was doing, but was indiscreet enough to consent. His behaviour to me all the time was the most respectful in the world. He took care to engage my attention by some interesting discourse, assuring me, as often as I attempted to move, that

it was quite early, and that till a coach could be had, it was to no purpose to attempt going.

I very freely confess, that being extremely heated at the playhouse, I was tempted to drink a glass or two of wine more than I was accustomed to, which flurried me a good deal; and as my heart was by no means indifferent to him who was entertaining me, the time passed away almost imperceptibly. However, recollecting myself at last, I insisted peremptorily upon going; when, seeing me in earnest, he pulled out his watch, and, as if violently surprised, declared it was past two o'clock: adding, in the greatest seeming consternation, that it would be impossible for me to go home that night, and cursing his own folly for the mischief he had brought upon me.

I will not attempt, Mr. Fitz-Adam, to describe the confusion I was in. Yet still I insisted upon going home, which he endeavoured to dissuade me from by saying, that he too well knew the temper of the gentleman at whose house I lived to think of carrying me thither at so late an hour; that he would conduct me to a lady of his acquaintance, who should wait on me home in the morning, and make an excuse for my lying out. I answered him, that I would lie nowhere but at 'home; that I detested myself for going out with him; and that I would return immediately, let the hour be what it would. 'Let us go, first of all,' replied he, 'to the lady's, where I will leave you but for a moment, and see if the family are sitting up for you; for to knock at the door, and be refused admittance, would ruin your reputation in the opinion of all the neighbourhood.' I still insisted upon going home; and a coach was accordingly called and procured; but instead of carrying me to my friends, it stopped at a house in another street. Here I was forced against my will

to alight. The mistress of it was up ; a circumstance which I should have wondered at, if I had not been frightened almost to death, and incapable of thinking, speaking, or knowing what I did.

The wretch, after having apologized to the lady for the distress he had brought me into, left me in great haste, to bring me intelligence of what was doing at home. He returned in a short time, and with the greatest seeming concern in his countenance told me, that he had learnt from one of the servants, that the family had supped at home ; that they were exasperated against me beyond forgiveness ; that they concluded me undone ; and that they had sworn never to admit me into their doors again.

I was quite thunderstruck at this intelligence, and accused the wretch who brought it me as the vilest of men. He fell upon his knees, conjuring me not to think him capable of any design in what was done, and vowing to sacrifice his life and fortune to reinstate me in the good opinion of my friends. I was obliged now to put myself under his protection ; but refused going to bed, though pressed to it by the lady of the house, who called herself his relation. Early in the morning, taking the lady along with him, he pretended to go again to my friends ; but returned to me with an account that they were quite outrageous against me, and absolutely determined never to see me again. I wrote to them in the most moving manner that my heart could indite, and gave the letter to the care of this false friend. I wrote also to my parents, letter after letter, but without receiving a syllable from them in return ; so that I now looked upon myself as completely undone. The anxiety I suffered threw me into a fever, during which time the wretch hardly ever stirred from my bed-side, vowing that his life depended upon my recovery. I was soon indeed restored to my health, but never to

my peace. My betrayer began now to talk to me of love ; and I began foolishly to regard him as one that had suffered too much for what I could not impute to him as a crime. He saw and took care hourly to improve my too favourable opinion of him ; and at length (for why should I dwell minutely on what I wish for ever to forget?) by a thousand stratagemis on his side, and by fatal inclination on my own, irrecoverably undid me.

From that very day his affections began to cool : and (will it be believed when I tell it?) he grew in a very little time to hate me to that degree, that in order to get rid of me, and to make our separation my own act, he confessed to me the whole scheme he had laid to get me ; showed me advertisements in the papers from my friends and parents, offering rewards for my discovery ; and returned me the letters I had written to them, every one of which he had detained.

I stood astonished at his villany, and abhorred him in my soul. But, alas ! it was now too late for me to apply to friends. Ruminating one afternoon on my deplorable condition, I was surprised at seeing an elderly lady enter my chamber. She made me an apology for her visit, and very frankly told me, that from distant hints which she had that day received from the mistress of the house, she apprehended I was fallen into bad hands ; which, if true, she would be glad to assist me to the utmost of her power. She spoke this with so much affection and good nature, that I made no scruple of telling her my whole story, which so extremely affected her, that she shed tears while I spoke, and often interrupted me with her exclamations against the villany of men. At the conclusion she offered that moment to take me away, assuring me that her house, her purse, and her sincerest friendship should always be

mine. I would have fallen on my knees to thank her, but she prevented me; and ordering a coach to be called, she conveyed me that very evening to her country-house.

I stayed there a week, and met with the most kind and tender treatment from her. She compelled me to accept some changes of clothes and linen, and then brought me to her house in town; where, in less than four-and-twenty hours, she told me, without the least ceremony, that I no doubt knew for what purpose she had taken me, and that as I could have no pretensions to modesty, she hoped my behaviour would be such as should give her no occasion to repent of her kindness to me. I desired to understand her, and was informed (though not in plain words) that my benefactress was a bawd, and that she had taken me into her family for the most infamous of purposes. I trembled with amazement, and insisted on leaving the house that instant. She told me, I was at full liberty to do so; but that first I must pay her for my lodging and clothes. She spoke this with great ease and carelessness, and then left me to myself. I ran down stairs with precipitation; but, alas! scarce was I out of the street before I was stopt and brought back by a bailiff who had a writ against me. I requested that I might have leave to write to the gentleman from whom I had been taken: for bad as he was, I said, he would not utterly desert me. I was permitted to write as I desired; and the wretch indeed answered my letter; but it was only to tell me that as I had thought proper to run away from him, he should have nothing farther to say to me; and that, in short, I must either submit to conditions, or go immediately with the bailiff. Frightened at the horrors of a prison, and hoping that my story might move compassion in

those to whom I was to be introduced, I consented to do as they would have me; but, alas! sir, I was mistaken; they listened indeed to my story; but instead of melting at my misfortunes, they adored me, they said, for my invention. At length, having led the life of a prostitute for more than a month, I attempted to make a second escape, and to fly to the hands of justice for protection: but I was again caught, and carried to a spunging-house; where, after remaining two days, a gentleman who had been admitted to me at that vile woman's came to see me in my confinement, paid off the debt for which I was arrested, and took me to be his mistress.

But though the life I now lead is in some degree more supportable than that which I have escaped from, yet to one who hopes that she has still some remains of principle left, it is terrible and shocking. My friends know what I am, and what I have been, but they reject and hate me: and I have not the least glimmering of hope ever to recover from the situation I am in, unless my story should merit the compassion of him to whom I now send it, and find a place in the World. Vile as I am, I would be otherwise if I might. I am not old in wickedness, though I have gone such lengths in it; being now really and truly but just turned of eighteen, and having left my father's house no more than fifteen months ago, two of which months I lived in innocence and reputation with the most worthy of families.

As to him who has brought upon me all this weight of misery, and who serenely and unconcernedly can reflect upon what he has done (for so I am sure he does), I have nothing to fear, and nothing to hope. I can therefore have but one inducement to desire your publication of this letter, which is, that my friends may know that I have gained that credit with

a stranger which they have refused to give me, and that I am really and truly an object of compassion.

I am, sir,

(though lost to myself)

Your most faithful, humble servant.

No. 98. THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 14, 1754.

It gives me great pleasure that I am able in this day's paper to congratulate the polite part of my fellow-subjects of both sexes, upon the splendid revival of that most rational entertainment, an Italian opera. Of late years it had seemed to sicken, so that I greatly feared that the unsuccessful efforts which it made from time to time were its convulsive and expiring pangs. But it now appears, and indeed much to the honour of this country, that we have still too many protectors and protectresses of the liberal arts to suffer that of music, the most liberal of them all, to sink for want of due encouragement.

I am sensible that Italian operas have frequently been the objects of the ridicule of many of our greatest wits; and, viewed in one light only, perhaps not without some reason. But as I consider all public diversions singly with regard to the effects which they may have upon the morals and manners of the public, I confess I respect the Italian operas, as the most innocent of any.

The severe Monsieur Boileau justly condemns the French operas, the moral of which he calls

————— *Morale lubrique*
Que Lully rechauffa des sons de sa musique.

But then it must be considered that French operas are always in French, and consequently may be understood by many French people; and that they are fine dramatic tragedies adorned with all the graces of poetry and harmony of sounds, and may probably inspire too tender, if not voluptuous sentiments. Can the Italian opera be accused of any thing of this kind? Certainly not. Were, what is called, the poetry of it intelligible in itself, it would not be understood by one in fifty of a British audience: but I believe that even an Italian of common candour will confess, that he does not understand one word of it. It is not the intention of the thing; for should the ingenious author of the words, by mistake, put any meaning into them, he would, to a certain degree, check and cramp the genius of the composer of the music, who perhaps might think himself obliged to adapt his sounds to the sense: whereas now he is at liberty to scatter indiscriminately, among the kings, queens, heroes and heroines, his adagios, his allegros, his pathetics, his cromatics, and his jiggs. It would also have been a restraint upon the actors and actresses, who might possibly have attempted to form their action upon the meaning of their parts; but as it is, if they do but seem, by turns, to be angry and sorry in the two first acts, and very merry in the last scene of the last, they are sure to meet with their deserved applause.

Signor Metastasio attempted some time ago a very dangerous innovation. He tried gently to throw some sense into his operas; but it did not take: the consequences were obvious, and nobody knew where they would stop.

The whole skill and judgment of the poet now consists in selecting about a hundred words (for the opera vocabulary does not exceed that number) that

terminate in liquids and vowels, and rhyme to each other. These words excite ideas in the hearer, though they were not the result of any in the poet. Thus the word *tortorella*, stretched out to a quaver of a quarter of an hour, excites in us the ideas of tender and faithful love; but if it is succeeded by *navicella*, that soothing idea gives way to the boisterous and horrid one of a skiff (that is, a heart) tossed by the winds and waves upon the main ocean of love. The handcuffs and fetters in which the hero commonly appears at the end of the second, or the beginning of the third act, indicate captivity, and when properly jingled to a pathetic piece of recitativo upon *questi ceppi*, are really very moving, and inspire a love of liberty. Can any thing be more innocent or more moral than this musical pantomime, in which there is not one indecent word or action, but where, on the contrary, the most generous sentiments are (however imperfectly) pointed out and inculcated.

I was once indeed afraid that the licentiousness of the times had infected even the opera; for in that of Alexander, the hero going into the heroine's apartment, found her taking a nap in an easy chair. Tempted by so much beauty, and invited by so favourable an opportunity, he gently approached, and *stole a pair of gloves*. I confess I dreaded the consequences of this bold step; and the more so, as it was taken by the celebrated Signor Senesino. But all went off very well; for the hero contented himself with giving the good company a song, in which he declared that the lips he had just kissed were a couple of rubies.

Another good effect of the Italian operas is, that they contribute extremely to the keeping of good hours; the whole audience (though passionately fond of music) being so tired before they are half, and so

sleepy before they are quite done, that they make the best of their way home, too drowsy to enter upon fresh pleasures that night.

Having thus rescued these excellent musical dramas from the unjust ridicule which some people of vulgar and illiberal tastes have endeavoured to throw upon them, I must proceed and do justice to the *virtuosos* and *virtuosas* who perform them. But I believe it will be necessary for me to premise, for the sake of many of my English readers, that *virtù* among the modern Italians signifies nothing less than what *virtus* did among the ancient ones, or what *virtue* signifies among us; on the contrary, I might say that it signifies almost every thing else. Consequently those respectable titles of *virtuoso* and *virtuosa* have not the least relation to the moral characters of the parties. They mean only that those persons (endowed, some by nature, and some by art, with good voices) have from their infancy devoted their time and labour to the various combinations of seven notes: a study that must unquestionably have formed their minds, enlarged their notions, and have rendered them most agreeable and instructive companions; and as such, I observe that they are justly solicited, received, and cherished by people of the first distinction.

As these illustrious personages come over here with no sordid view of profit, but merely *per far piacer a la nobilita Inglese*, that is, to oblige the English nobility, they are exceedingly good and condescending to such of the said English nobility, and even gentry, as are desirous to contract an intimacy with them. They will, for a word's speaking, dine, sup, or pass the whole day with people of a certain condition, and perhaps sing or play, if civilly requested. Nay, I have known many of them so good as to pass two or three months of the summer at the

country-seats of some of their noble friends, and thereby mitigate the horrors of the country and the mansion-house, to my lady and her daughters. I have been assured by many of their chief patrons and patronesses, that they are *all the best creatures in the world*; and from the time of Signor Cavaliero Nicolini down to this day, I have constantly heard the several great performers, such as Farinelli, Carestini, Monticelli, Gaffarielli, as well as the Signore Cuzoni, Faustina, &c. much more praised for their affability, the gentleness of their manners, and all the good qualities of the head and heart, than for either their musical skill or execution. I have even known these their social virtues lay their protectors and protectresses under great difficulties how to reward such distinguished merit. But benefit-nights luckily came to their assistance, and gave them an opportunity of insinuating, with all due regard, into the hand of the performer, in lieu of a ticket, a considerable bank-bill, a gold snuff-box, a diamond-ring, or some such trifle. It is to be hoped that the illustrious signor Farinelli has not yet forgot the many instances he experienced of British munificence; for it is certain that many private families *still remember them*.

All this is very well; and I greatly approve of it, as I am of tolerating and naturalizing principles. But, however, as the best things may admit of improvement by certain modifications, I shall now suggest two; the one of a public, the other of a private nature. I would by all means welcome these respectable guests, but I would by no means part with them, as is too soon and too often the case. Some of them, when they have got ten or fifteen thousand pounds here, unkindly withdraw themselves, and purchase estates in land in their own countries; and

others are seduced from us, by the pressing invitations of some great potentate to come over to superintend his pleasures, and to take a share in his councils. This is not only a great loss to their particular friends, the nobility and gentry, but to the nation in general, by turning the balance of our musical commerce considerably against us. I would therefore humbly propose, that immediately upon the arrival of these valuable strangers, a writ of *ne exeat regnum* should be issued to keep them here. The other modification, which I beg leave to hint at only, it being of a private nature, is, that no *virtuoso* whose voice is below a *contralto* shall be taken to the country-seat of any family whatsoever; much less any strapping fiddler, bassoon or bass viol, who does not even pretend to sing, or if he does, sings a rough tenor, or a tremendous bass. The consequences may be serious, but at least the appearances are not edifying.

No. 99. THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 21, 1754.

*Prudens futuri temporis exitum
 Caliginosâ nocte præmit Deus;
 Ridetque, si mortalis ultra
 Fas trepidat. Quod adæst, memento
 Componere æquus.*

HOR.

It requires very little experience of the world to discover that mankind seldom enjoy the present hour, but are almost continually employing their thoughts

about the future. This disposition may indeed serve to delude some people into a happiness, which, otherwise, they would never know; and we sometimes see men engaging in prospects apparently disadvantageous to themselves, that they may enjoy the comfortable thought of having benefited their families. But unfortunately this is not the general turn or mankind; and, I am afraid, still less so of my countrymen than of any others: they are constantly looking towards the dark side of the prospect, fearing every thing, and hoping nothing.

This unhappy disposition seems to spread its baleful influence more fatally in this month, than in any other of the whole year: for besides the colds, vapours, and nervous disorders with which individuals are afflicted, the *state* always suffers exceedingly during this month. I myself remember *this country undone* every November for these forty years. The truth is, that to make amends for that levity and dissipation of thought which horse-racing and rural sports have occasioned in the summer, every zealous Englishman sits down at this season seriously to consider the state of the nation; and always, upon mature reflection, concludes that matters are so bad, that the business of government cannot possibly be carried on through another session. The products of the press, either proceeding from persons really affected by the season, or cunningly designed to suit the gloomy disposition of the buyer, all tend to increase this disorder of the mind. *Serious Considerations*, *The Tears of Trade*, *The Groans of the Plantations*, and the like, are the titles that spread the sale of pamphlets at this season of the year; while *The Cordial for low Spirits*, and *The Pills to purge Melancholy*, have no chance for a vent, till the spring has given a turn to the blood, and put the spirits into a disposition to be pleased.

There are indeed many recreations and amusements in this metropolis, that are designed as so many antidotes to the general gloom : but though we have had this year the greatest importation of entertainment that ever was known, I doubt there are many inhabitants of this city who are at present so totally possessed with the spleen, that they do not know of half the number of dancers, singers, mimics, and beauties, which are already arrived. It is, however, comfortable to reflect on that happy revolution, which is constantly brought about by the Christmas holidays and the lengthening of the days. Those who seemed so lately to be lost in despair grow into spirits on a sudden ; and plays, operas, balls, pantomimes, and burlettas diffuse an universal ecstacy.

But even in the midst of this highest tide of spirits, I am sorry to say it, the most groundless suppositions of what may possibly happen shall spread a cloud over all your joy. The idea of an invasion, a comet, or an earthquake, shall keep the whole town in an agony for many weeks. In short, every apprehension shall in its turn make an impression on our imaginations, except that of a *future state*.

That this great event should not occupy those minds which are totally engrossed by the *present*, is not much to be wondered at ; but that it should be the only view towards which these *lookers-forward* never turn their eyes is an inconsistency altogether unaccountable.

When Falstaff's wench is sitting upon his knee, her hint seems to be a little ill-timed, when she advises him *to patch up his old body for Heaven* ; and his reply is suitable to the place and occasion ; *Peace, good Doll ; do not speak like a death's head ; do not bid me remember mine end*. Mrs. Quickly was no less blamable on the other side, when finding him

so near his end, that he began to cry out, she says, *Now I, to comfort him, bid him he should not think of God.*

I avoid entering seriously and particularly into this subject, that I may not give my paper the air of a sermon; and instead of using arguments of a religious cast, I desire only to recommend a propriety and consistency of thought and conduct. It is therefore that I would advise my readers either to throw aside, not for this month only, but for their whole lives, this gloomy curiosity that will avail them nothing, and to enter into a free and full enjoyment of the present; or if, of necessity, they must direct their whole attention to the future, let it be to that expectation, which they may depend upon with the utmost certainty, which will afford the most profitable exercise for their inquisitive thoughts, and which will be the only instance where an anxious concern for the future can possibly be of service to them.

I have been principally led into this train of thinking by a letter which I received yesterday by the penny-post, and which I shall here communicate to my readers, as a proper conclusion of this paper.

TO MR. FITZ-ADAM.

SIR,

I am just returned from a short visit to some relations of mine, who live in a large old mansion-house in the country. The gloomy aspect of the place, the unpleasing appearance of nature at the fall of the leaf, and the alteration of the weather with the change of the season, made me acquiesce in the received opinion, that there is really something dreadful in the influence of this month of November, which, how-

ever, we who live in London have no such apparent reason to be affected with.

The melancholy impression which I received from the place was greatly increased by the turn of its inhabitants. My uncle and aunt are blessed with a competent fortune, and two fine children ; but they neither enjoy the one, nor educate the other ; their whole attention being engrossed by objects, which, in their estimation, are of much greater consequence. My uncle is continually employed in computing the year in which this kingdom is to become a province to France ; and my aunt is no less occupied in endeavouring to fix the exact time of the Millennium.

A younger brother of my uncle's, who lives in the family, and who is a very great mathematician, has been busied many years in calculations, which, he asserts, are of the utmost importance to the world, as they affect the duration and well-being of it. He is greatly apprehensive that, from Sir Isaac Newton's system, the time will come when this earth, round as it was at first created, will be as flat as a pancake : but long before this event can happen, it must certainly suffer a more palpable inconvenience. He has made a discovery that the profusion of man consumes faster than the earth produces. Vast fleets, and enormous buildings, have wasted almost all our oak ; and the firs of Norway are beginning to fail. What shall we do, he says, when the coal, salt, iron, and lead mines are exhausted ? And besides, may it not happen before these events take place, that such vast excavations, inconsiderately made, may give a pernicious inequality to the balance of the globe ? These arguments are slighted by his brother, who is more immediately alarmed for the balance of Europe ; but they have great weight with my aunt, as they evince the necessity of a renewal, and tend to hasten, as well as prove, the establishment of the Millennium.

A farther account of the anxieties of this family may possibly be the subject of another letter: I shall, however, conclude this with discovering to you my own. I am in great pain lest the young squire should turn out a vulgar and imperious blockhead, from having been left all his life to servants; and I am sorry to say, that the event which my uncle and aunt have most immediate reason to apprehend is, my cousin Mary's running away with the butler.

I am, sir,
Your humble servant,
A. Z.

No. 100. THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 28, 1754.

I HEARD the other day with great pleasure from my worthy friend Mr. Dodsley, that Mr. Johnson's English Dictionary, with a grammar and history of our language prefixed, will be published this winter, in two large volumes in folio.

I had long lamented that we had no lawful standard of our language set up, for those to repair to, who might choose to speak and write it grammatically and correctly; and I have as long wished that either some one person of distinguished abilities would undertake the work singly, or that a certain number of gentlemen would form themselves, or be formed by the government, into a society for that purpose. The late ingenious Doctor Swift proposed a plan of this nature to his friend (as he thought

him) the lord treasurer Oxford, but without success; precision and perspicuity not being in general the favourite objects of ministers, and perhaps still less so of that minister than of any other.

Many people have imagined that so extensive a work would have been best performed by a number of persons, who should have taken their several departments, of examining, sifting, winnowing (I borrow this image from the Italian *Crusca*), purifying, and finally fixing our language, by incorporating their respective funds into one joint stock. But whether this opinion be true or false, I think the public in general, and the republic of letters in particular, greatly obliged to Mr. Johnson, for having undertaken and executed so great and desirable a work. Perfection is not to be expected from man; but if we are to judge by the various works of Mr. Johnson, already published, we have good reason to believe that he will bring this as near to perfection as any one man could do. The plan of it, which he published some years ago, seems to me to be a proof of it. Nothing can be more rationally imagined, or more accurately and elegantly expressed. I therefore recommend the previous perusal of it to all those who intend to buy the dictionary, and who, I suppose, are all those who can afford it.

The celebrated dictionaries of the Florentine and French academies owe their present size and perfection to very small beginnings. Some private gentlemen of Florence, and some at Paris, had met at each other's houses to talk over and consider their respective languages: upon which they published some short essays, which essays were the embryos of those perfect productions, that now do so much honour to the two nations. Even Spain, which seems not to be the soil where, of late at least, letters have either pro-

spered, or been cultivated, has produced a dictionary, and a good one too, of the Spanish language, in six large volumes in folio.

I cannot help thinking it a sort of disgrace to our nation, that hitherto we have had no such standard of our language: our dictionaries at present being more properly what our neighbours the Dutch and the Germans call theirs, *word-books*, than dictionaries in the superior sense of that title. All words, good and bad, are there jumbled indiscriminately together, insomuch that the injudicious reader may speak and write as inelegantly, improperly, and vulgarly, as he pleases, by and with the authority of one or other of our word-books.

It must be owned that our language is at present in a state of anarchy; and hitherto, perhaps, it may not have been the worse for it. During our free and open trade, many words and expressions have been imported, adopted, and naturalized from other languages, which have greatly enriched our own. Let it still preserve what real strength and beauty it may have borrowed from others, but let it not, like the Tarpeian maid, be overwhelmed and crushed by unnecessary foreign ornaments. The time for discrimination seems to be now come. Toleration, adoption, and naturalization, have run their lengths. Good order and authority are now necessary. But where shall we find them, and at the same time the obedience due to them? We must have recourse to the old Roman expedient in times of confusion, and choose a dictator. Upon this principle I give my vote for Mr. Johnson to fill that great and arduous post. And I hereby declare that I make a total surrender of all my rights and privileges in the English language, as a free-born British subject, to the said Mr. Johnson, during the term of his dictatorship. Nay more, I will not only obey him, like an old Ro-

man, as my dictator, but, like a modern Roman, I will implicitly believe in him as my pope, and hold him to be infallible while in the chair, but no longer. More than this he cannot well require; for I presume that obedience can never be expected when there is neither terror to enforce, nor interest to invite it.

I confess that I have so much honest English pride, or perhaps prejudice, about me, as to think myself more considerable for whatever contributes to the honour, the advantage, or the ornament of my native country. I have therefore a sensible pleasure in reflecting upon the rapid progress which our language has lately made, and still continues to make all over Europe. It is frequently spoken, and almost universally understood, in Holland; it is kindly entertained as a relation in the most civilized parts of Germany; and it is studied as a learned language, though yet little spoken, by all those in France and Italy, who either have, or pretend to have, any learning.

The spreading the French language over most parts of Europe, to the degree of making it almost an universal one, was always reckoned among the glories of the reign of Lewis the fourteenth. But be it remembered, that the success of his arms first opened the way to it; though at the same time it must be owned, that a great number of most excellent authors who flourished in his time added strength and velocity to its progress. Whereas our language has made its way singly by its own weight and merit, under the conduct of those great leaders, Shakespeare, Bacon, Milton, Locke, Newton, Swift, Pope, Addison, &c. A nobler sort of conquest, and a far more glorious triumph, since graced by none but willing captives!

These authors, though for the most part, but indifferently translated into foreign languages, gave

other nations a sample of the British genius. The copies, imperfect as they were, pleased, and excited a general desire of seeing the originals; and both our authors and our language soon became classical.

But a grammar, a dictionary, and a history of our language, through its several stages, were still wanting at home, and importunately called for from abroad. Mr. Johnson's labours will now, and, I dare say, very fully, supply that want, and greatly contribute to the farther spreading of our language in other countries. Learners were discouraged by finding no standard to resort to, and consequently thought it incapable of any. They will now be undeceived and encouraged.

There are many hints and considerations relative to our language, which I should have taken the liberty of suggesting to Mr. Johnson, had I not been convinced that they have equally occurred to him: but there is one, and a very material one it is, to which perhaps he may not have given all the necessary attention. I mean the genteeler part of our language, which owes both its rise and progress to my fair countrywomen, whose natural turn is more to the copiousness than to the correctness of diction. I would not advise him to be rash enough to proscribe any of those happy redundancies, and luxuriances of expression, with which they have enriched our language. They willingly inflict fetters, but very unwillingly submit to wear them. In this case his task will be so difficult, that I design, as a common friend, to propose, in some future paper, the means which appear to me the most likely to reconcile matters.

P. S. I hope that none of my courteous readers will upon this occasion be so uncourteous, as to suspect me of being a hired and interested puff of this

work ; for I most solemnly protest, that neither Mr. Johnson, nor any person employed by him, nor any bookseller or booksellers concerned in the success of it, have ever offered me the usual compliment of a pair of gloves or a bottle of wine ; nor has even Mr. Dodsley, though my publisher, and, as I am informed, deeply interested in the sale of this dictionary, so much as invited me to take a bit of mutton with him.

No. 101. THURSDAY, DECEMBER 5, 1754.

WHEN I intimated in my last paper some distrust of Mr. Johnson's complaisance to the fairer part of his readers, it was because I had a greater opinion of his impartiality and severity as a judge, than of his gallantry as a fine gentleman. And indeed I am well aware of the difficulties he would have to encounter, if he attempted to reconcile the polite with the grammatical part of our language. Should he, by an act of power, banish and attain many of the favourite words and expressions with which the ladies have so profusely enriched our language, he would excite the indignation of the most formidable, because the most lovely, part of his readers: his dictionary would be condemned as a system of tyranny, and he himself, like the last Tarquin, run the risk of being deposed. So popular and so powerful is the female cause ! On the other hand, should he, by an act of grace, admit, legitimate, and incorporate into our language those words and expressions, which, hastily begot, owe their birth to

the incontinency of female eloquence; what severe censures might he not justly apprehend from the learned part of his readers, who do not understand complaisances of that nature!

For my own part, as I am always inclined to plead the cause of my fair fellow-subjects, I shall now take the liberty of laying before Mr. Johnson those arguments which upon this occasion may be urged in their favour, as introductory to the compromise which I shall humbly offer and conclude with.

Language is indisputably the more immediate province of the fair sex: there they shine, there they excel. The torrents of their eloquence, especially in the vituperative way, stun all opposition, and bear away, in one promiscuous heap, nouns, pronouns, verbs, moods and tenses. If words are wanting (which indeed happens but seldom), indignation instantly makes new ones; and I have often known four or five syllables that never met one another before hastily and fortuitously jumbled into some word of mighty import.

Nor is the tender part of our language less obliged to that soft and amiable sex; their love being at least as productive as their indignation. Should they lament in an involuntary retirement the absence of the adored object, they give new murmurs to the brook, new sounds to the echo, and new notes to the plaintive Philomela. But when this happy copiousness flows, as it often does, into gentle numbers, good gods! how is the poetical diction enriched, and the poetical licence extended! Even in common conversation, I never see a pretty mouth opening to speak, but I expect, and am seldom disappointed, some new improvement of our language. I remember many very expressive words coined in that fair mint. I assisted at the birth of that most significant word *flirtation*, which dropped from the most beautiful

mouth in the world, and which has since received the sanction of our most accurate laureat in one of his comedies. Some inattentive and undiscerning people have, I know, taken it to be a term synonymous with coquetry; but I lay hold of this opportunity to undeceive them, and eventually to inform Mr. Johnson, that flirtation is short of coquetry, and intimates only the first hints of approximation, which subsequent coquetry may reduce to those preliminary articles, that commonly end in a definitive treaty.

I was also a witness to the rise and progress of that most important verb, *to fuzz*; which, if not of legitimate birth, is at least of fair extraction. As I am not sure that it has yet made its way into Mr. Johnson's literary retirement, I think myself obliged to inform him that it is at present the most useful and the most used word in our language; since it means no less than dealing twice together with the same pack of cards, for luck's sake, at whist.

Not contented with enriching our language by words absolutely new, my fair countrywomen have gone still farther, and improved it by the application and extension of old ones to various and very different significations. They take a word and change it, like a guinea into shillings for pocket-money, to be employed in the several occasional purposes of the day. For instance, the adjective *vast* and its adverb *vastly* mean any thing, and are the fashionable words of the most fashionable people. A fine woman (under this head I comprehend all fine gentlemen too, not knowing, in truth, where else to place them properly) is vastly obliged, or vastly offended, vastly glad, or vastly sorry. Large objects are vastly great, small ones are vastly little; and I had lately the pleasure to hear a fine woman pronounce, by a happy metonymy, a very small gold snuff-box that was produced in company to be vastly pretty, because it was

so vastly little. Mr. Johnson will do well to consider seriously to what degree he will restrain the various and extensive significations of this great word.

Another very material point still remains to be considered; I mean the orthography of our language, which is at present very various and unsettled.

We have at present two very different orthographies, the *pedantic*, and the *polite*; the one founded upon certain dry, crabbed rules of etymology and grammar; the other, singly upon the justness and delicacy of the ear. I am thoroughly persuaded that Mr. Johnson will endeavour to establish the former; and I perfectly agree with him, provided it can be quietly brought about. Spelling, as well as music, is better performed by book than merely by the ear, which may be variously affected by the same sounds. I therefore most earnestly recommend to my fair countrywomen, and to their faithful or faithless servants, the fine gentlemen of this realm, to surrender, as well for their own private, as for the public utility, all their natural rights and privileges of misspelling, which they have so long enjoyed, and so vigorously exerted. I have really known very fatal consequences attend that loose and uncertain practice of auricular orthography; of which I shall produce two instances as a sufficient warning.

A very fine gentleman wrote a very harmless, innocent letter to a very fine lady, giving her an account of some trifling commissions which he had executed according to her orders. This letter, though directed to the lady, was, by the mistake of a servant, delivered to and opened by the husband; who finding all his attempts to understand it unsuccessful, took it for granted that it was a concerted cipher, under which a criminal correspondence, not much to his own honour or advantage, was secretly carried

on. With the latter in his hand, and rage in his heart, he went immediately to his wife, and reproached her in the most injurious terms with her supposed infidelity. The lady, conscious of her own innocence, calmly requested to see the grounds of so unjust an accusation; and being accustomed to the auricular orthography, made shift to read to her incensed husband the most inoffensive letter that ever was written. The husband was undeceived, or at least wise enough to seem so: for in such nice cases one must not peremptorily decide. However, as sudden impressions are generally pretty strong, he has been observed to be more suspicious ever since.

The other accident had much worse consequences. Matters were happily brought, between a fine gentleman and a fine lady, to the decisive period of an appointment at a third place. *The place where* is always the lover's business, *the time when* the lady's. Accordingly an impatient and rapturous letter from the lover signified to the lady the house and street *where*; to which a tender answer from the lady assented, and appointed the time *when*. But unfortunately, from the uncertainty of the lover's auricular orthography, the lady mistook both house and street, was conveyed in a hackney chair to a wrong one, and in the hurry and agitation which ladies are sometimes in upon those occasions, rushed into a house where she happened to be known, and her intentions consequently discovered. In the mean time the lover passed three or four hours at the right place, in the alternate agonies of impatient and disappointed love, tender fear, and anxious jealousy.

Such examples really make one tremble; and will, I am convinced, determine my fair fellow-subjects and their adherents to adopt, and scrupulously conform to Mr. Johnson's rules of true orthography by

book. In return to this concession, I seriously advise him to publish, by way of appendix to his great work, a genteel neological dictionary, containing those polite, though perhaps not strictly grammatical words and phrases, commonly used, and sometimes understood, by the *beau monde*. By such an act of toleration, who knows but he may, in time, bring them within the pale of the English language? The best Latin dictionaries have commonly a short supplemental one annexed, of the obsolete and barbarous Latin words, which pedants sometimes borrow to show their erudition. Surely, then, my countrywomen, the enrichers, the patronesses, and the harmonizers of our language, deserve greater indulgence. I must also hint to Mr. Johnson, that such a small supplemental dictionary will contribute infinitely to the sale of the great one; and I make no question but that under the protection of that little work, the great one will be received in the genteelest houses. We shall frequently meet with it in ladies' dressing-rooms, lying upon the harpsichord, together with the knotting bag, and Signor Di Giardini's incomparable concertos; and even sometimes in the powder-rooms of our young nobility, upon the same shelf with their German flute, their powder mask, and their four-horse whip.

No. 102. THURSDAY, DECEMBER 12, 1754.

Proferet in lucem speciosâ vocabula rerum. HOR.

MR. FITZ-ADAM,

As an Englishman, I gratefully applaud the zeal you show for ascertaining our language; and am equally ready to acknowledge the use and even the necessity of the neological dictionary, mentioned in your last paper. I must, however, beg leave so far to dissent from you as to doubt the propriety of joining to the fixed and permanent standard of our language a vocabulary of words which perish and are forgot within the compass of the year.

That we are obliged to the ladies for most of these ornaments to our language, I readily acknowledge; but it must also be acknowledged that it would be degrading their invention to suppose they would desire a perpetuity of any thing whose loss they can so easily supply. It would be no less an error to imagine that they wanted a repository for their words after they have worn them out, than that they wished for a wardrobe to preserve their cast-off fashions. Novelty is their pleasure: singularity, and the love of being before-hand, is greatly flattering to the female mind. From hence arises the present taste for planting, and the pleasure the ladies take in showing their exotics, as giving them an opportunity of talking Greek. With what respectful pleasure do their admirers gaze, while their pretty mouths trol out the toxicodendron, chrysanthemum, orchis, tragopogon, hypericum, and the like.

From hence only can we account for that jargon

which the French call the *bon ton*, which they are obliged to change continually, as soon as they find it profaned by any other company but one step lower than themselves in their degrees of politeness. A lady armed with a new word exults with a conscious superiority, and exercises a tyranny over those who do not understand her, like the delegates of the law, with their *capias*, *latitat*, and *venire facias*: but a word which has been a month upon the town loses its force, and makes as poor a figure as the law put into English.

In order therefore to interpret every new word, and what is still more important, to give the different acceptations of the same words, according to the various senses in which they are received and understood in the different parts of this extensive metropolis, I would recommend a small portable vocabulary to be annually published and bound up with the almanack. It is of great consequence that a work of this nature should be duly and carefully executed, because though it is very grievous to be ignorant, it is much more terrible to be deceived or misled; and this is greatly to be apprehended from the abuse of turning old words from their former signification to a sense not only very different, but often directly contrary to it. The coining a new word, that is to say, a new sound, which had no sense previously affixed to it, will probably have no other ill effect than puzzling for a while the understanding and memory; but what shall we say to the turn which the present age has taken of giving an entire new sense to words and expressions, and that in so delicate a case as the characters of men? I remember when a certain person informed a large company at the polite end of the town, that, in the city, a *good man* was a term meant to denote a man who was able and ready at all times to pay a bill at sight, the

whole assembly shook their heads, and thought it was a strange perversion of language. And yet these very persons are not aware that the phrases they commonly use would appear equally strange on the other side Temple-bar. A *silly fellow*, for instance, would there be thought a weak young man, who had been so often imposed upon that he was not worth a groat; instead of that, it is the most common term for one who possesses the very fortune, talents, mistress or preferment which his describer wishes to have. In like manner, a *silly woman* implies one who is more beautiful, young, happy, and good-natured than the rest of her female acquaintance. *Odd man* is a term we frequently hear vociferated in the streets, when a chairman is in want of a partner. But when a lady of quality orders her porter to let in no *odd people*, she means all decent, grave men, women who have never been talked of, many of her own relations, and all her husband's.

Besides those words which owe their rise to caprice or accident, there are many which, having been long confined to particular professions, offices, districts, climates, &c. are brought into public use by fashion, or the reigning topic on which conversation has happened to dwell for any considerable time. During the great rebellion they talked universally the language of the scriptures. *To your tents, O Israel*, was the well known cry of faction in the streets. They beat the enemy *from Dan even unto Beersheba*, and expressed themselves in a manner which must have been totally unintelligible, except in those extraordinary times, when people of all sorts happened to read the Bible. To these succeeded the wits of Charles's days; to understand whom it was necessary to have remembered a great deal of bad poetry; as they generally began or concluded their discourse with a couplet. In our memory the late war, which

began at sea, filled our mouths with terms from that element. The land war not only enlarged the size of our swords and hats, but of our words also. The peace taught us the language of the secretary's office. Our country squires made *treaties* about their game, and ladies *negotiated* the meeting of their lap-dogs. Parliamentary language has been used *without doors*. We drink claret or port according to the state of our *finances*. To spend a week in the country or town is a *measure*; and if we dislike the measure, we put a *negative* upon it. With the rails and buildings of the Chinese, we adopted also for a while their language. A doll of that country we called a joss, and a slight building a pagoda. For that year we talked of nothing but palanquins, nabobs, mandarins, junks, sepoys, &c. To what was this owing, but the war in the East Indies?

I would therefore farther propose, in order to render this work complete, that a supplement be added to it, which shall be an explanation of the words, figures and forms of speech of the country, that will most probably be the subject of conversation for the ensuing year. For instance: Whoever considers the destination of our present expedition must think it high time to publish an interpretation of West India phrases, which will soon become so current among us, that no man will be fit to appear in company, who shall not be able to ornament his discourse with those jewels. For my part, I wish such a work had been published time enough to have assisted me in reading the following extract of a letter from one of our colonies.

—‘ The *Chippeways* and *Orundaks* are still very troublesome. Last week they *scalped* one of our Indians: but the *Six nations* continue firm; and at a meeting of *Sachems* it was determined *to take up the hatchet*, and *make the war-kettle boil*. The

French desired *to smoke the calumet of peace*; but the *half-king* would not consent. They offered the *speech-belt*, but it was refused. Our governor has received an account of their proceedings, together with *a string of wampum*, and *a bundle of skins to brighten the chain*.’

A work of this kind, if well executed, cannot fail to make the fortune of the undertaker: for I am convinced that a *guide to the New-English tongue* must have as great a sale as the British Peerage, Baronetage, Register of Races, List of the Houses, and other such-like nomenclators, which constitute the useful part of the modern library.

I am, sir,

Your most humble servant,

C. D.

No. 103. THURSDAY, DECEMBER 19, 1754.

I AM never better pleased than when I can vindicate the honour of my native country; at the same time I would not endeavour to defend it preposterously, nor to contradict the eyes, the senses of mankind, out of stark good patriotism. The fluctuating condition of the things of this world necessarily produces a change in manners and morals, as well as in the face of countries and cities. Climates cannot operate so powerfully on constitutions, as to preserve the same character perpetually to the same nations. I do not doubt but in some age of the world the Bœotians will be a very lively, whimsical people, and famous for their repartees;

and that our neighbour islanders will be remarkable for the truth of their ideas, and for the precision with which they will deliver their conceptions. Some men are so bigoted to antiquated notions, that if they were, even in this age, to write a panegyric on Old England, they would cram their composition with encomiums on our good-nature, our bravery, and our hospitality. This indeed might be a panegyric on Old England, but would have very little resemblance to the modern characteristics of the nation. Our good-nature was necessarily soured by the spirit of party; our courage has been a little cramped by the act of parliament that restrained prize-fighting; and hospitality is totally impracticable, since a much more laudable custom has been introduced, and prevailed universally, of paying the servants of other people much more than their master's dinner cost. Yet we shall always have virtues sufficient to countenance very exalted panegyrics: and if some of our more heroic qualities are grown obsolete, others of a gentler cast, and better calculated for the help of society, have grown up and diffused themselves in their room. While we were rough and bold, we could not be polite; while we feasted half a dozen wapentakes with sirloins of beef, and sheep roasted whole, we could not attend to the mechanism of a plate, no bigger than a crown piece, loaded with the legs of canary birds, dressed à la Pompadour.

Let nobody start at my calling this a polite nation. It shall be the business of this paper to prove that we are the most polite nation in Europe; and that France must yield to us in the extreme delicacy of our refinements. I might urge, as a glaring instance in which that nation has forfeited her title to politeness, the impertinent spirit of her parliaments, which, though couched in very civilly-worded remonstrances, is certainly at bottom very ill-bred. They have contradicted

their monarch, and crossed his clergy in a manner not to be defended by a people who pique themselves upon complaisance and attentions.—But I abominate politics: and when I am writing in defence of politeness, shall certainly not blend so coarse a subject with so civil a theme. It is not virtue that constitutes the politeness of a nation, but the art of reducing vice to a system that does not shock society. Politeness (as I understand the word) is an universal desire of pleasing others (that are not too much below one) in trifles, for a little time; and of making one's intercourse with them agreeable to both parties, by civility without ceremony, by ease without brutality, by complaisance without flattery, by acquiescence without sincerity. A clergyman who puts his patron into a sweat by driving him round the room, till he has found the coolest place for him, is not polite. When Bubbamira changes her handkerchief before you, and wipes her neck, rather than leave you alone while she should perform the refreshing office in the next room, I should think she is not polite. When Bon-cœur shivers on your dreary hill, where for twenty years you have been vainly endeavouring to raise reluctant plantations, and yet profess that only some of the trees have been a little kept back by the late dry season, he is not polite; he is more; he is kind. When Sophia is really pleased with the stench of a kennel, because her husband likes that she should go and look at a favourite litter, she must not pretend to politeness; she is only a good wife. If this definition and these instances are allowed me, it will be difficult to maintain that the nations who have had the most extensive renown for politeness had any pretensions to it. The Greeks called all the rest of the world barbarians: the Romans went still farther, and treated them as such. Alexander, the best-bred hero amongst the former, I must own, was

polite, and showed great attentions for Darius's family; but I question, if he had not extended his attentions a little farther to the princess Statira, whether he could be pronounced quite well-bred. As to the Romans, so far were they from having any notion of treating foreigners with regard, that there is not one classic author that mentions a single ball or masquerade given to any stranger of distinction. Nay, it was a common practice with them to tie kings, queens, and women of the first fashion of other countries in couples, like hounds, and drag them along their *via Piccadillia* in triumph, for the entertainment of their shop-keepers and prentices. A practice that we should look upon with horror! What would the Examiner have said, if the Duke of Marlborough had hauled Marshal Tallard to St. Paul's or the Royal Exchange, behind his chariot? How deservedly would the French have called us savages, if we had made Marshal Bellisle pace along the kennel in Fleet-street, or up Holborn, while some of our ministers or generals called it an ovation!

The French, who attempt to succeed the Romans in empire, and who affect to have succeeded them in politeness, have adopted the same way of thinking, though so contrary to true good-breeding. They have no idea that an Englishman or a German ever sees a suit of clothes till he arrives at Paris. They wonder, if you talk of a coach at Vienna, or of a soupe at London: and are so confident of having monopolized all the arts of civilized life, that with the greatest complaisance in the world, they affirm to you, that they suppose your dukes and duchesses live in caves, with only the property of wider forests than ordinary, and that *les mi lords Anglois*, with a great deal of money, live upon raw flesh, and ride races without breeches or saddles. At their houses they receive you with wonder that shocks you, or with indifference

that mortifies you; and if they put themselves to the torture of conversing with you, after you have taken infinite pains to acquire their language, it is merely to inform you, that you neither know how to dress like a sensible man, nor to eat, drink, game, or divert yourself like a christian. How different are our attentions to foreigners! how open our houses to their nobility, our purses to their tradesmen! But without drawing antitheses between our politeness and their ill-breeding, I shall produce an instance in which we have pushed our refinements on the duties of society beyond what the most civilized nations ever imagined. We are not only well-bred in common intercourse, but our very crimes are transacted with such a softness of manners, that though they may injure, they are sure never to affront our neighbour. The instance I mean is, the extreme good-breeding that has been introduced into the science of robbery: which (considering how very frequent it is become) would really grow a nuisance to society, if the professors of it had not taken all imaginable precautions to make it as civil a commerce as gaming, conveyancing, toad-eating, pimping, or any of the money-inveigling arts, which have already got an established footing in the world. A highwayman would be reckoned a brute, a monster, if he had not all manner of attention not to frighten the ladies; and none of the great Mr. Nash's laws are more sacred than that of restoring any favourite bauble to which a robbed lady has a particular partiality. Now turn your eyes to France. No people upon earth has less of the *sçavoir vivre* than their banditti. No Tartar has less *douceur* in his manner than a French highwayman. He takes your money without making you a bow, and your life without making you an apology. This obliges their government to keep up a numerous *guét*, a severe police, racks, gibbets, and twenty

troublesome things, which might all be avoided, if they would only reckon and breed up their thieves to be good company. I know that some of our latest imported young gentlemen affirm that the *Sieur Mandrieu*, the terror of the eastern provinces, learned to dance of *Marseille* himself, and has frequently supped with the incomparable *Jelliot*. But till I hear whether he dies like a gentleman, I shall forbear to rank him with the *petit-maitres* of our own *Tyburn*. How extreme is the *politesse* of the latter! *Mrs. Chencvix* has not more insinuation when she sells a snuff-box of *papier maché*, or a bergamot toothpick-case, than a highwayman when he begs to know if you have no rings or bank-bills.

An acquaintance of mine was robbed a few years ago, and very near shot through the head by the going off of a pistol of the accomplished *Mr. M'Lean*; yet the whole affair was conducted with the greatest good-breeding on both sides. The robber, who had only taken a purse this way, because he had that morning been disappointed of marrying a great fortune, no sooner returned to his lodgings, than he sent the gentleman two letters of excuses, which, with less wit than the epistles of *Voiture*, had ten times more natural and easy politeness in the turn of their expression. In the postscript, he appointed a meeting at *Tyburn*, at twelve at night, where the gentleman might purchase again any trifles he had lost; and my friend has been blamed for not accepting the rendezvous, as it seemed liable to be construed by ill-natured people into a doubt of the honour of a man, who had given him all the satisfaction in his power, for having unluckily been near shooting him through the head.

The *Lacedæmonians* were the only people, except the English, who seem to have put robbery on a right foot; and I have often wondered how a nation that

had delicacy enough to understand robbing on the highway, should at the same time have been so barbarous, as to esteem poverty, black-broth, and virtue ! We had no highwaymen, that were men of fashion, till we had exploded plum-porridge.

But of all the gentlemen of the road who have conformed to the manners of the great world, none seem to me to have carried true politeness so far as a late adventurer, whom I beg leave to introduce to my readers under the title of the visiting highwayman. This refined person made it a rule to rob none but people he visited ; and whenever he designed an impromptu of that kind, dressed himself in a rich suit, went to the lady's house, asked for her, and not finding her at home, left his name with her porter, after inquiring which way she was gone. He then followed, or met her on her return home, proposed his demands, which were generally for some favourite ring or snuff-box that he had seen her wear, and which he had a mind to wear for her sake ; and then letting her know that he had been to wait on her, took his leave with a cool bow, and without scampering away as other men of fashion do from a visit with really the appearance of having stolen something.

As I do not doubt but such of my fair readers as propose being at home this winter will be impatient to send this charming smuggler (Charles Fleming by name) a card for their assemblies, I am sorry to tell them that he was hanged last week.

No. 104. THURSDAY, DECEMBER 26, 1754.

*Scia cum possim, quod delectantia malim
Scribere, tu causa es, Lector.*—MART.

THIS being the day after the festival of Christmas, as also the last Thursday of the old year, I feel myself in a manner called upon for a paper suitable to the solemnity of the occasion. But upon reflection I find it necessary to reject any such consideration, for the same reason that I have hitherto declined giving too serious a turn to the generality of these essays. Papers of pleasantry, enforcing some lesser duty, or reprehending some fashionable folly, will be of more real use than the finest writing and most virtuous moral, which few or none will be at the pains to read through. I do not mean to reproach the age with having no delight in any thing serious; but I cannot help observing, that the demand for moral essays (and the present times have produced many excellent ones) has of late fallen very short of their acknowledged merits.

The world has always considered amusement to be the principal end of a public paper: and though it is the duty of a writer to take care that some useful moral be inculcated, yet unless he be happy in the peculiar talent of couching it under the appearance of mere entertainment, his compositions will be useless: his readers will sleep over his unenlivened instructions, or be disgusted at his too frequently overhauling old worn out subjects, and retailing what is to be found in every library in the kingdom.

Innocent mirth and levity are more apparently the province of such an undertaking as this : but whether they are really so or not, while mankind agree to think so, the writer who shall happen to be of a different opinion must soon find himself obliged either to lay aside his prejudices or his pen. Nor ought it to be supposed in the present times, when every general topic is exhausted, that there can be any other way of engaging the attention than by representing the manners as fast as they change, and enforcing the novelty of them with all the powers of drawing, and heightening it with all the colouring of humour. The only danger is, lest the habit of levity should tend to the admission of any thing contrary to the design of such a work. To this I can only say, that the greatest care has been taken in the course of these papers to weigh and consider the tendency of every sentiment and expression ; and if any thing improper has obtained a place in them, I can truly assert that it has been only owing to that inadvertency which attends a various publication ; and which is so inevitable, that (however extraordinary it may seem to those who are now to be told it) it is notorious that there are papers printed in the Guardian which were written in artful ridicule of the very undertakers of that work, and their most particular friends.

In writings of humour, figures are sometimes used of so delicate a nature, that it shall often happen that some people will see things in a direct contrary sense to what the author and the majority of readers understand them. To such the most innocent irony may appear irreligion or wickedness. But in the misapprehension of this figure, it is not always that the reader is to blame. A great deal of irony may seem very clear to the writer, which may not be so properly managed as to be safely trusted to the

various capacities and apprehensions of all sorts of readers. In such cases the conductor of a paper will be liable to various kinds of censure, though in reality nothing can be proved against him but want of judgment.

Having given my general reasons against the too frequent writing of serious papers, it may not be improper to speak more particularly of the season which gave rise to these reflections, and to show that as matters stand at present, it would not even be a sanction for such kind of compositions. Our ancestors considered Christmas in the double light of a holy commemoration, and a cheerful festival; and accordingly distinguished it by devotion, by vacation from business, by merriment and hospitality. They seemed eagerly bent to make themselves and every body about them happy. With what punctual zeal did they wish one another a *merry Christmas!* and what an omission would it have been thought, to have concluded a letter without *the compliments of the season!* The great hall resounded with the tumultuous joys of servants and tenants, and the gambols they played served as amusement to the lord of the mansion and his family, who, by encouraging every art conducive to mirth and entertainment, endeavoured to soften the rigour of the season, and to mitigate the influence of winter. What a fund of delight was the choosing King and Queen upon Twelfth-night! and how greatly ought we to regret the neglect of mince-pies, which, besides the idea of merry-making inseparable from them, were always considered as the test of schismatics! How zealously were they swallowed by the orthodox, to the utter confusion of all fanatical recusants! If any country gentleman should be so unfortunate in this age as to lie under a suspicion of heresy, where will he find so easy a

method of acquitting himself, as by the ordeal of plum-porridge?

To account for a revolution which has rendered this season (so eminently distinguished formerly) now so little different from the rest of the year, will be no difficult task. The share which devotion had in the solemnization of Christmas is greatly reduced; and it is not to be expected, that those who have no religion at any other time of the year should suddenly bring their minds from a habit of dissipation to a temper not very easy to be taken up with the day. As to the influence which vacation from business and festal mirth have had in the celebration of the holidays, they can have no particular effect in the present times, when almost every day is spent like an anniversary rejoicing, when every dinner is a feast, the very tasting of our wines hard drinking, and our common play gaming. It is not therefore to be wondered at, that there is nothing remaining in this town to characterize the time, but the orange and rosemary, and the bellman's verses.

The Romans allotted this month to the celebration of the feast called the Saturnalia. During these holidays every servant had the liberty of saying what he pleased to his master with impunity.

————— Age, libertate Decembri,
Quando ita majores voluerunt, utere ———

I wish with all my heart that the same indulgence was allowed to servants in these times, provided that it would be a restraint upon their licentiousness through the rest of the year.

The most fatal revolution, and what principally concerns this season, is the too general desertion of the country, the great scene of hospitality. Of all the follies of this age, it is the least to be accounted

for, how small a part of such as throng to London in the winter are those who either go upon the plea of business, or to amuse themselves with what were formerly called the pleasures of the place. There are the theatres, music, and I may add many other entertainments, which are only to be had in perfection in the metropolis; but it is really a fact, that three parts in four of those who crowd the houses which are already built, and who are now taking leases of foundations which are to be houses as fast as hands can make them, come to town with the sole view of passing their time over a card-table.

To what this is owing I am at a loss to conceive; but I have at least the satisfaction of saying, that I have not contributed to the growth of this folly; nor do I find, upon a review of all my papers, that I have painted this town in such glowing and irresistible colours, as to have caused this forcible attraction. I have not so much as given an ironical commendation of crowds, which seem to be the great allurements; nor have I any where attempted to put the pleasures of the town in competition with those of the country. On the contrary, it has been, and will be, my care, during the continuance of this work, to delineate the manners and fashions of a town-life so truly and impartially, as rather to satisfy than excite the curiosity of a country reader, who may be desirous to know what is doing in the world. If at any time I should allow the metropolis its due praises, as being the great mart for arts, sciences, and erudition, I ought not to be accused of influencing those persons who pay their visits to it upon very different considerations: nor can any thing I shall say, of the tendency above-mentioned, be pleaded in excuse for coming up to town merely to play at cards.

P. S. It would be dealing ungratefully by my correspondents, if at the close of the second year I

forgot to acknowledge the many obligations I owe them. It may also be necessary to add, that several letters are come to hand, which are not rejected, but postponed.

No. 105. THURSDAY, JANUARY 2, 1755.

As I am desirous of beginning the new year well, I shall devote this paper to the service of my fair countrywomen, for whom I have so tender a concern, that I examine into their conduct with a kind of parental vigilance and affection. I sincerely wish to approve, but at the same time am determined to admonish and reprimand, whenever, for their sakes, I may think it necessary. I will not, as far as in me lies, suffer the errors of their minds to disgrace those beautiful dwellings in which they are lodged; nor will I, on the other hand, silently and quietly allow the affectation and abuse of their persons to reflect contempt and ridicule upon their understandings.

Native artless beauty has long been the peculiar distinction of my fair fellow subjects. Our poets have long sung their genuine lilies and roses, and our painters have long endeavoured, though in vain, to imitate them; beautiful nature mocked all their art. But I am now informed by persons of unquestioned truth and sagacity, and indeed I have observed but too many instances of it myself, that a great number of those inestimable originals, by a strange inversion of things, give the lie to their poets, and servilely copy their painters; degrading and disguising themselves into worse copies of bad copies of themselves. It is even whispered about town of

that excellent artist, Mr. Liotard, that he lately refused a fine woman to draw her picture, alleging that he never copied any body's works but his own and God Almighty's.

I have taken great pains to inform myself of the growth and extent of this heinous crime of *self-painting* (I had almost given it a harder name); and I am sorry to say, that I have found it to be extremely epidemical. The present state of it, in its several degrees, appears to be this.

The inferior class of women, who always ape their betters, make use of a sort of rough-cast, little superior to the common lath and plaster, which comes very cheap, and can be afforded out of the casual profits of the evening.

The class immediately above these paint occasionally, either in size or oil, which, at sixpence per foot square, comes within a moderate weekly allowance.

The generality of women of fashion make use of a superfine stucco, or plaster of Paris highly glazed, which does not require a daily renewal, and will, with some slight occasional repairs, last as long as their curls, and stand a pretty strong collision.

As for the transcendent and divine pearl powder, with an exquisite varnish superinduced to fix it, it is by no means common, but it is reserved for ladies not only of the first rank, but of the most considerable fortunes; it being so very costly, that few pin-mones can keep a face in it, as a face of condition ought to be kept. Perhaps the same number of pearls *whole* might be more acceptable to some lovers, than in powder upon the lady's face.

I would now fain undeceive my fair countrywomen of an error, which, gross as it is, they too fondly entertain. They flatter themselves that this artificial is not discoverable, or distinguishable from native

white. But I beg leave to assure them, that however well prepared the colour may be, or however skilful the hand that lays it on, it is immediately discovered by the eye at a considerable distance, and by the nose upon a nearer approach; and I overheard the other day, at the coffee-house, Captain Phelim M'Manus complaining, that when warm upon the face it had the most nauseous taste imaginable. Thus offensive to three of the senses, it is not, probably, very inviting to a fourth.

Talking upon this subject lately with a friend, he said, that in his opinion a woman who painted white gave the public a pledge of her chastity, by fortifying it with a wall, which she must be sure that no man would desire either to batter or scale. But I confess I did not agree with him as to the motive, though I did as to the consequences; which are, I believe, in general, that they lose both *operam et oleum*. I have observed that many of the sagacious landlords of this great metropolis who let lodgings do at the beginning of the winter new vamp, paint, and stucco the fronts of their houses, in order to catch the eyes of passengers, and engage lodgers. Now, to say the truth, I cannot help suspecting that this is rather the real motive of my fair countrywomen, when they thus incrust themselves. But, alas! those outward repairs will never tempt people to *inquire within*. The cases are greatly different; in the former they both adorn and preserve, in the latter they disgust and destroy.

In order therefore to put an effectual stop to this enormity, and save, as far as I am able, the native carnations, the eyes, the teeth, the breath, and the reputations of my beautiful fellow-subjects, I here give notice, that if, after one calendar month from the date hereof (I allow that time for the consumption of stock in hand) I shall receive any authentic

testimonies (and I have my spies abroad) of this sophistication and adulteration of the fairest works of nature, I am resolved to publish at full length the names of the delinquents. This may perhaps at first sight seem a bold measure; and actions of scandal and defamation may be thought of: but I go upon safe ground; for before I took this resolution, I was determined to know all the worst possible consequences of it to myself, and therefore consulted one of the most eminent counsel in England, an old acquaintance and friend of mine, whose opinion I shall here most faithfully relate.

When I had stated my case to him as clearly as I was able, he stroked his chin for some time, picked his nose, and hemmed thrice, in order to give me his very best opinion. ‘By publishing the names at full length in your paper, I humbly conceive,’ said he, ‘that you avoid all the troublesome consequences of innuendoes. But the present question, if I apprehend it right, seems to be, whether you may thereby be liable to any other action, or actions, which, for brevity sake, I will not here enumerate. Now by what occurs to me off-hand, and without consulting my books, I humbly apprehend that no action will lie against you; but, on the contrary, I do conceive, and indeed take upon me to affirm, that you may proceed against these criminals, for such I will be bold to call them, either by action or indictment: the crime being of a public and a heinous nature. Here it is not only the *suppressio veri*, which is highly penal, but the *crimen falsi* too. An *action popular*, or of *qui tami*, would certainly lie; but however I should certainly prefer an indictment upon the statutes of forgery, 2 Geo. II. chap. 25, and 7 Geo. II. chap. 22; for forgery, I maintain it, it is. The fact, as you well know, will be tried by a jury, of whom one moiety will doubtless be plasterers; by

that it will unquestionably be found.' Here my counsel paused for some time, and hemmed pretty often; however I remained silent, observing plainly by his countenance that he had not finished, but was thinking on. In a little time he resumed his discourse, and said, 'All things considered, Mr. Fitz-Adam, I would advise you to bring your indictment upon the *Black Act*, 9 Geo. I. chap. 22, which is a very fine penal statute.' I confess I could not check the sudden impulse of surprise which this occasioned in me; and interrupting him perhaps too hastily, 'What, sir,' said I, 'indict a woman upon the *Black Act* for *painting white*? Here my counsel interrupting me in his turn, said with some warmth, 'Mr. Fitz-Adam, Mr. Fitz-Adam, you, like too many others, have not sufficiently considered all the beauty, good sense, and solid reasoning of the law. The law, sir, let me tell you, abhors all refinements, subtleties, and quibblings upon words. What is black or white to the law? Do you imagine that the law views colours by the rule of optics? No, God forbid it should. The law makes black white, or white black, according to the rules of justice. The law considers the meaning, the intention, the *quo animo* of all actions, not their external modes. Here a woman disguises her face with white, as the Waltham people did with black, and with the same fraudulent and felonious intention. Though the colour be different, the guilt is the same in the intendment of the law. It is felony without benefit of clergy, and the punishment is death.' As I perceived that my friend had now done, I asked his pardon for the improper interruption I had given him, owned myself convinced, and offered him a fee, which he took by habit, but soon returned, by reflection upon our long acquaintance and friendship.

This I hope will be sufficient to make such of my fair countrywomen as are conscious of their guilt

seriously consider their danger; though perhaps, from my natural lenity, I shall not proceed against them with the utmost rigour of the law, nor follow the example of the ingenious author of our last musical drama, who strings up a whole row of Penelope's maids of honour. I shall therefore content myself with publishing the names of the delinquents as above mentioned; but others may possibly not have the same indulgence: and the law is open for all.

I shall conclude this paper with a word or two of serious advice to all my readers of all sorts and sexes. Let us follow nature, our honest and faithful guide; and be upon our guard against the flattering delusions of art. Nature may be helped and improved, but will not be forced or changed. All attempts in direct opposition to her are attended with ridicule; many with guilt. The woman to whom nature has denied beauty, in vain endeavours to make it by art: as the man to whom nature has denied wit, becomes ridiculous by the affectation of it: they both defeat their own purposes, and are in the case of the valetudinarian, who creates or increases his distempers by his remedies, and dies of his immoderate desire to live.

No. 106. THURSDAY, JANUARY 9, 1755.

Satis Eloquentiæ. ————— SALLUST.

HAVING received a letter of a very extraordinary nature, I think myself obliged to give it to the public, though I am afraid many of my readers may object to the terms of art, of which I cannot divest it: but I shall make no apology for what may any way tend to

the advancement of a science, which is now become so fashionable, popular, and flourishing.

MR. FITZ-ADAM,

As all sorts of persons are at this present juncture desirous of becoming speakers; and as many of them, through the neglect of parents or otherwise, have been totally ungrounded in the first principles or rudiments of rhetoric, I have with great pains and judgment selected such particulars as may most immediately, and without such rudiments, conduce to the perfection of that science, and which, if duly attended to, will teach grown gentlemen to speak in public in so complete a manner, that neither they nor their audience shall discover the want of an earlier application.

I do not address myself to you like those who correspond with the daily papers, in order to puff off my expeditious method by referring you to the many persons of quality whom I have taught in four-and-twenty hours; I choose openly and fairly to submit my plan to your inspection, which will show you that I teach rather how to handle antagonists than arguments.

I distinguish what kind of man to cut with a syllogism, and whom to overwhelm with the sorites; whom to ensnare with the crocodile, and whom to hamper in the horns of the dilemma. Against the pert, young, boldasserter, I direct the *argumentum ad verecundiam*. This is frequently the most decisive argument that can be used in a populous assembly. If, for instance, a forward talker should advance that such an ancient poet is dull, you put him at once both to silence and shame, by saying, that Aristotle has commended him. If the dispute be about a Greek word, and he pronounces it to be inelegant, and never

used by any author of credit, you confound him by telling him it is in Aristophanes ; and you need not discover that it is in the mouth of a bird, a frog, or a Scythian who talks broken Greek.

To explain my *argumentum ad ignorantiam* (which appears to be of the least use, because it is only to be employed against a modest man), let us suppose a person speaking with diffidence of some transaction on the continent : you may ask him with a sneer, Pray, sir, were you ever abroad ? If he has related a fact from one of our American islands, you may assert he can know nothing of the affairs of that island, for you were born there ; and to prove his ignorance, ask him what latitude it is in.

In loquacious crowds, you will have much more frequent occasions for using my *argumentum ad hominem* ; and the minute particulars into which men are led by egotism will give you great advantages in pressing them with consequences drawn from their supposed principles. You may also take away the force of a man's argument by concluding from some equivocal expression, that he is a Jacobite, a republican, a courtier, a methodist, a freethinker, or a Jew. You may sling at his country, or profession : he talks like an apothecary, you believe him to be a tooth-drawer, or know that he is a tailor. This argument might be of great use at the bar in examining witnesses, if the lawyers would not think it inconsistent with the dignity and politeness of their profession.

By this sketch of my plan, you may see that my pupils may most properly be said to study men : and the principal thing I endeavour to teach them from that knowledge is, the art of discovering the different strength of their competitors, so as to know when to answer, and when to lie by. And as I entirely throw out of my system the *argumentum ad judicium*,

which, according to Mr. Locke, 'is the using of proofs drawn from any of the foundations of knowledge,' there will be nothing in my academy that will have the least appearance of a school, and of consequence nothing to make a gentleman either afraid or ashamed of attending it.

Inquire for A. B. at the bar of the Bedford coffee-house.

As the foregoing letter so fully explains itself, I shall take no other notice of it; but in complaisance to my correspondent, shall throw together a few loose observations on our present numerous societies for the propagation of eloquence. And here I cannot but please myself with the reflection, that as dictionaries have been invented, by the help of which those who cannot study may learn arts and sciences; here is now found a method of teaching them to those who cannot read.

These foundations are instituted in the very spirit of Lycurgus, who discountenanced all written laws, and established in their stead a system of policy called *rhetra*, from its being spoken, which he ordered to be the daily subject of discourse, and ordained mixed assemblies for that end, where the young might be taught, by attending to the conversation of the old.

In Turkey, where the majority of the inhabitants can neither write nor read, the charitable care of that considerate people has provided a method of compensating the want of those arts, and even the use of the press, by having a relay of narrators ready to be alternately elevated on a stool in every coffee-house, to supply the office of newspapers and pamphlets to the Turkish quidnuncs and critics.

Speech being the faculty which exalts man above the rest of the creation, we may consider eloquence

as the talent which gives him the most distinguished pre-eminence over his own species: and yet Juvenal makes no scruple to declare, that it would have been better for Cicero to have been a mere poetaster, and for Demosthenes to have worked under his father as a blacksmith, than to have frequented the schools of rhetoric.

*Diis ille adversis genitus fatoque sinistro,
Quem pater, ardentis massæ fuligine lippus,
A fornace et forcipibus, gladiosque parante
Incude, ac luteo Vulcano, ad Rhetora misit.*

I am glad to find that our blacksmiths and other artisans have a nobler way of thinking, and the spirit to do for themselves what the father of Demosthenes did for him. And I see this with the greater pleasure, as I hope I may consider the seminaries which are daily instituted as rising up in support of truth, virtue and religion, against the libels of the press. It is not to be doubted but that we are safe on the side of oral argumentation, as no man can have the face to utter before witnesses such shameful doctrines as have too frequently appeared in anonymous pamphlets. If it should ever be objected that the frequency of such assemblies may possibly, in time, produce sophistry, quibbling, immorality and scepticism, because this was the case at Athens, so famous for its numerous schools of philosophy, where, as Milton says,

*Much of the soul they talk, but all awry;
And in themselves seek virtue, and to themselves
All glory arrogate, to God give none:
Rather accuse him under usual names,
Fortune and Fate:—*

I answer, that these false doctrines of God and the

soul were thus bandied about by a parcel of heathens, blind and ignorant at best, but for the greatest part the most useless, idle and profligate members of the state; and that it is not therefore to be apprehended, in this enlightened age, that men of sober lives, and profitable professions, will run after sophists, to waste their time, and unhinge their faith and opinions. However, as the perverseness of human nature is strange and unaccountable, if I should find these modern schools in any way to contribute to the growth of infidelity or libertinism, I hereby give notice that I shall publicly retract my good opinion of them, notwithstanding all my prepossessions in favour of eloquence.

Though the following letter is written with all the spleen and acrimony of a rival orator, I think myself obliged, from the impartiality I observe to all my correspondents, to give it a place in this paper.

SIR,

As all intruders and interlopers are ever disagreeable to established professions, I am so incensed against some late pretenders to oratory, that though I daily fulminate my displeasure *ex cathedrâ*, I now apply to you for a more extensive proclamation of my resentment.

I have been for many years an orator of the stage itinerant; and from my earliest youth was bred, under the auspices of Apollo, to those two beloved arts of that deity, physic and eloquence: not like those pretenders, who betray not only a deficiency of erudition, but also a most manifest want of generosity; a virtue which our professors have ever boasted. Universal benevolence is our fundamental principle. We raise no poll-tax on our hearers: our words are gratuitous, like the air and light in which they are delivered. I have

therefore no jealousy of these mercenary spirits; my audiences have only been led aside by novelty; they will soon grow weary of such extortioners, and return to the old stage. But the misfortune is, that these innovations have turned the head of a most necessary servant of mine, commonly known by the name of Merry Andrew: and I must confess it gives me a real uneasiness when one of his wit and parts talks of setting up against me.

Yours,
CIRCUMFORANEUS.

No. 107. THURSDAY, JANUARY 16, 1755.

— *Quicquid Græcia mendax*
Audet in historiâ — Juv.

As the French have lately introduced an entire new method of writing history, and as it is to be presumed we shall be as ready to ape them in this as in all other fashions; I shall lay before the public a loose sketch of such rules as I have been able hastily to throw together for present use, till some great and distinguished critic may have leisure to collect his ideas, and publish a more complete and regular system of the modern art of writing history.

For the sake of brevity, I shall enter at once upon my subject, and address my instruction to the future historian.

Remember to prefix a long preface to your history, in which you will have a right to say whatever comes into your head: for all that relates to your history may with propriety be admitted, and all that is

foreign to the purpose may claim a place in it, because it is a preface. It will be sufficient, therefore, if I give you only a hint upon the occasion, which if you manage with dexterity, or rather audacity, will stand you in great stead.

Be sure you seize every opportunity of introducing the most extravagant commendations of Tacitus; but be careful how you enter too minutely into any particulars you may have heard of that writer, for fear of discovering that you have *only* heard of them. The safest way will be to keep to the old custom of abusing all other historians, and vilifying them in comparison of him. But in the execution of this, let me entreat you to do a little violence to your modesty, by avoiding every insinuation that may set him an inch above yourself.

Before you enter upon the work, it will be necessary to divest yourself entirely of all regard for truth. To conquer this prejudice may perhaps cost you some pains; but till you have effectually overcome it, you will find innumerable difficulties continually obtruding themselves to thwart your design of writing an entertaining history in the modern taste.

The next thing is, to find out some shrewd reason for rejecting all such authentic papers as are come to light since the period you are writing of was last considered; for if you cannot cleverly keep clear of them, you will be obliged to make use of them; and then your performance may be called dull and dry; which is a censure you ought as carefully to avoid, as to contend for that famous compliment which was paid the author of the history of Charles the Twelfth, by his most illustrious patron, who is himself an historian, *Plus beau que la vérité*.

I am aware of the maxim of Polybius, ‘that history void of truth is an empty shadow.’ But the motto

of this paper may serve to convict that dogmatist of singularity, by showing that his own countrymen disavowed his pretended axiom even to a proverb. Though we may allow truth to the first historian of any particular æra, the nature of things requires that truth must gradually recede, in proportion to the frequency of treating the same period; or else the last hand would be absolutely precluded from every advantage of novelty. It is fit therefore that we modernize the maxim of Polybius, by substituting the word *wit* in the place of *truth*; but as all writers are not blessed with a ready store of wit, it may be necessary to lay down some other rules for the compiling of history, in which it is expedient that we avail ourselves of all the artifices which either have been, or may be made use of, to surprise, charm, sadden, or confound the mind of the reader.

In treating of times that have been often written upon, there can be no such thing as absolute novelty; therefore the only method to be taken in such cases is, to give every occurrence a new turn. You may take the side of Philip of Macedon against Demosthenes and the obstinate republicans; and you will have many instances to show how wantonly whole seas of blood have been shed for the sake of those two infatuating sounds, *liberty*, and *religion*. It was a lucky hit of an English biographer, that of writing the vindication and panegyric of Richard the Third: and I would advise you to attempt something of the same nature. For instance: You may undertake to show the unreasonableness of our high opinion of Queen Elizabeth, and our false notions of the happiness of her government. For as to lives and characters, you have one principal rule to observe; and that is, to elevate the bad, and depreciate the good. But in writing the characters of others, always keep your own (if you have any value for it) in view; and never

allow to any great personage a virtue which you either feel the want of, or a notorious disregard for. You may question the moral character of Socrates, the chastity of Cyrus, the constancy of the martyrs, the piety and sincerity of the reformers, the bravery of Cromwell, and the military talents of King William; and you need never fear the finding authorities to support you in any detraction, among the writers of anecdotes; since Dion Cassius, a grave historian, has confidently asserted that Cicero prostituted his wife, trained up his son in drunkenness, committed incest with his daughter, and lived in adultery with Cerellia.

I come next to ornaments; under which head I consider sentences, prodigies, digressions, and descriptions. On the two first I shall not detain you, as it will be sufficient to recommend a free use of them, and to be new, if you can. Of digressions you may make the greatest use, by calling them to your aid whenever you are at a fault. If you want to swell your history to a folio, and have only matter for an octavo (suppose, for example, it were the story of Alexander), you may enter into an inquiry of what that adventurer would have done, if he had not been poisoned; whether his conquests, or Kouly Khan's, were the most extraordinary; what would have been the consequence of his marching westward; and whether he would have beat the Duke of Marlborough. You may also introduce in this place a dissertation upon fire-arms, or the art of fortification. In descriptions, you must not be sparing, but outgo every thing that has been attempted before you. Let your battles be the most bloody, your sieges the most obstinate, your castles the most impregnable, your commanders the most consummate, and their soldiers the most intrepid. In describing a sea-fight, let the enemy's fleet be the most numerous, and their ships the largest

that ever were known. Do not scruple to burn a thousand ships, and turn their crews half-scorched into the sea; there let them survive a while by swimming, that you may have an opportunity of jamming them between their own and the enemy's vessels: and when you have gone through the dreadful distresses of the action, conclude by blowing up the admiral's own ship, and scattering officers of great birth and bravery in the air. In the sacking of a town, murder all the old men and young children in the cruelest manner, and in the most sacred retreats. Devise some ingenious insults on the modesty of matrons. Ravish a great number of virgins, and see that they are all in the height of beauty and purity of innocence. When you have fired all the houses, and cut the throats of ten times the number of inhabitants they contained, exercise all manner of barbarity on the dead bodies. And that you may extend the scene of misery, let some escape, but all naked. Tear their uncovered limbs; cut their feet for want of shoes; harden the hearts of the peasants against them, and arm the elements with unusual rigour for their persecution: drench them with rain, benumb them with frost, and terrify them with thunder and lightning.

If in writing voyages and travels you have occasion to send messengers through an uninhabited country, do not be over-tender or scrupulous how you treat them. You may stop them at rivers, and drown all their servants and horses: infest them with fleas, lice, and musquitoes; and when they have been eaten sufficiently with these vermin, you may starve them to a desire of eating one another; and if you think it will be an ornament to your history, e'en cast the lots, and set them to dinner. But if you do this, you must take care that the savage chief to whom they are sent does not treat them

with man's flesh; because it will be no novelty: I would rather advise you to alter the bill of fare to an elephant, a rhinoceros, or an alligator. The king and his court will of course be drinking out of human skulls; but what sort of liquor you must fill them with, to surprise an European, I must own I cannot conceive. In treating of the Indian manners and customs, you may make a long chapter of their conjuring, their idolatrous ceremonies, and superstitions; which will give you a fair opportunity of saying something smart on the religion of your own country. On their marriages you cannot dwell too long; it is a pleasing subject, and always, in those countries, leads to polygamy, which will afford occasion for reflections moral and entertaining. When your messengers have their audience of the king, you may as well drop the business they went upon, and take notice only of his civilities and politeness in offering to them the choice of all the beauties of his court; by which you will make them amends for all the difficulties you have led them into.

I cannot promise you much success in the speeches of your savages, unless it were possible to hit upon some bolder figures and metaphors than those which have been so frequently used. In the speeches of a civilized people, insert whatever may serve to display your own learning, judgment, or wit; and let no man's low extraction be a restraint on the advantages of your education. If in an harangue of Wat Tyler, a quotation from the classics should come in pat, or in a speech of Muley Moluch a sentence from Mr. Locke, let no consideration deprive your history of such ornaments.

To conclude, I would advise you in general not to be sparing of your speeches, either in number or length: and if you also take care to add a proper quantity of reflections, your work will be greedily

bought up by all members of oratories, reasoning societies, and other talkative assemblies of this most eloquent metropolis.

No. 108. THURSDAY, JANUARY 23, 1755.

*Hos est Româ decedere? Quos ego homines effugi, cum in
hos incidi?*
CICERO ad ATTICUM.

I HAVE generally observed when a man is talking of his country-house, that the first question usually asked him is, ‘Are you in a good neighbourhood?’ From the frequency of this inquiry, one would be apt to imagine that the principal happiness of a country life was generally understood to result from the neighbourhood: yet whoever attends to the answer commonly made to this question will be of a contrary opinion. Ask it of a lady, and you will be sure to hear her exclaim, ‘Thank God! we have no neighbours!’ which may serve to convince you that you have paid your court very ill, in supposing that a woman of fashion can endure the insipid conversation of a country neighbourhood. The man of fortune considers every inferior neighbour as an intruder on his sport, and quarrels with him for killing that game with which his very servants are cloyed. If his neighbour be an equal, he is of consequence more averse to him, as being in perpetual contest with him as a rival. His sense of a superior may be learnt from those repeated advertisements, which every body must have observed in the public papers, recommending a house upon sale, for being

ten miles distant from a lord. The humorist hides himself from his neighbour; the man of arrogance despises him; the modest man is afraid of him; and the penurious considers a length of uninhabited fen as the best security for his beef and ale.

If we trace this spirit to its source, we shall find it to proceed partly from pride and envy, and partly from the high opinion that men are apt to entertain of their own little clans or societies, which the living in large cities tends greatly to increase, and which is always accompanied with a contempt for those who happen to be strangers to such societies, and consequently a general prejudice against the unknown. The truth of the matter is, that persons unknown are, for that very reason, persons that we have no desire to know.

A man of a sociable disposition, upon coming into an inn, inquires of the landlord what company he has in the house: the landlord tells him, 'There is a fellow of a college, a lieutenant of a man of war, a lawyer, a merchant, and the captain in quarters;' to which he never fails to add, 'and I dare say, sir, that any of them will be very glad of your company;' knowing that men drink more together than when alone. 'Have you nobody else?' says the guest sullenly. 'We have nobody else, sir.' 'Then get me my supper as fast as you can, and I'll go to bed.' The same behaviour is practised by each of these gentlemen in his turn; and for no other reason than that none of the company happens to be either of his profession or acquaintance.

But if we look with the least degree of wonder at the manner in which the greatest part of mankind behave to strangers, it should astonish us to see how they treat those whom they are intimately acquainted with, and whom they rank under the sacred titles of

neighbours and friends. Yet such is the malignity of human nature, that the smallest foible, the most venial inadvertency, or the slightest infirmity, shall generally occasion contempt, hatred, or ridicule, in those very persons who ought to be the foremost to conceal or palliate such failings. Death, accident, robbery, and ruin, instead of exciting compassion, are only considered as the great sources of amusement to a neighbourhood. Does any disgrace befall a family? The tongues and pens of all their acquaintance are instantly employed to disperse it through the kingdom. Nor is their alacrity in divulging the misfortunes of a neighbour at all more remarkable than their humanity in accounting for them. They are sure to ascribe every trivial evil to his folly, and every great one to his vices. But these are slight instances of malevolence: your true neighbour's spleen is never effectually roused but by prosperity. An unexpected succession to a large fortune; the discovery of a mine upon your estate; a prize in the lottery; but most of all, a fortunate marriage, shall employ the malice and invention of a neighbourhood for years together.

Envy is ingenious, and will sometimes find out the prettiest conceits imaginable to serve her purposes: yet it is observable that she delights chiefly in contradiction. If you excel in any of the elegant arts, she pronounces at once that you have no taste; if in wit, you are dull; if you live in apparent harmony with your wife and family, she is sure you are unhappy; if in affluence or splendor, she knows that you are a beggar. It must indeed be confessed that envy does meet with great provocations; and there are people in the world who take extraordinary pains to appear much more happy, rich, virtuous, and considerable, than they really are: but, on the other

hand, were they to take equal care to avoid such appearances, they would not be able absolutely to escape her rancour.

I was entertained last summer by a friend in the country, who seemed to have formed very just ideas of a neighbourhood. This gentleman had a considerable estate left him, which he had little reason to expect; and having no particular passion to gratify, it was indifferent to him how he disposed of this large addition to his income. He had no desire of popularity, but had a very great dislike to an ill name; which made him altogether as anxious to screen himself from detraction, as others are to acquire applause. Some weeks passed away in that common dilemma into which an increase of fortune throws every thinking man, who knows that by hoarding up he must become the aversion, and by squandering the contempt, of all his neighbours. But disliking the appearance of parsimony more than extravagance, he proposed laying out a considerable sum all at once, upon rebuilding his house: but that design was soon over-ruled by the consideration that it would be said he had destroyed a very convenient mansion for the sake of erecting a showy outside. He next determined to new-model his gardens, from an opinion that he should oblige all sorts of people, by affording bread to the industrious, and pleasant walks to the idle: but recollecting that in the natural beauties of his grounds he had great advantages over the old gardens of his neighbours, and from thence knowing that he must become the object of their spleen and abuse, he laid aside also that invidious design. In the same manner he was obliged to reject every proposal of expense, that might in any way be considered as a monument of superiority; therefore, to avoid the other censure of penuriousness, he re-

solved at last to procure the best cook that could be had for money. From that time he has taken no thought but to equip himself and his attendants in the plainest manner, keeping religiously to the sole expense of a constant good table, and avoiding in that, as well as in every thing else, whatever has the least appearance of ostentation. Thus has he made himself inoffensively remarkable, and, what was the great point of his life, escaped detraction; excepting only that a certain dignified widow, who had been originally housekeeper to her late husband, takes occasion frequently to declare she does not care to dine with him, because the dishes are so ill served up, and so tasteless, that she can never make a dinner.

I know not how to close this subject more properly than by sketching out the characters of what are called good and bad neighbours.

A *good neighbour* is one who having no attention to the affairs of his own family, nor any allotment for his time, is ready to dispose of it to any of his acquaintance, who desire him to hunt, shoot, dance, drink, or play at cards with them; who thinks the civilities he receives in one house no restriction upon his tongue in another, where he makes himself welcome by exposing the foibles or misfortunes of those he last visited, and lives in a constant round of betraying and lessening one family or another.

A *bad neighbour* is he who retires into the country, from having been fatigued with business, or tired with crowds; who, from a punctilio in good breeding, does not show himself forward in accepting of the visits of all about him, conscious of his love of quiet, and fearing lest he should be thought tardy in his returns of civility. His desire of being alone with his family procures him the character of reserved and morose; and his candid endeavours to explain away the ma-

licious turn of a tale, that of contradictory and disagreeable. Thus vindicating every one behind his back, and consequently offending every one to his face, he subjects himself to the personal dislike of all, without making one friend to defend him.

If after this it be asked, what are the duties of neighbourhood? I answer in the words of Mr. Addison, in that incomparable essay of his on the employment of time: 'To advise the ignorant, relieve the needy, comfort the afflicted, are duties that fall in our way almost every day of our lives. A man has frequent opportunities of mitigating the fierceness of a party; of doing justice to the character of a deserving man; of softening the envious, quieting the angry, and rectifying the prejudiced; which are all of them employments suited to a reasonable nature, and bring great satisfaction to the person who can busy himself in them with discretion.'

I have always considered the ninety-third Spectator, from whence the foregoing passage is taken, as the most valuable lesson of that eminent moralist; because a due observance of the excellent plan of life which he has there delineated can never fail to make men happy and good neighbours.

No. 109. THURSDAY, JANUARY 30, 1755.

TO MR. FITZ-ADAM.

SIR,

A LONDON gentlemen and his lady, who are distant relations, as well as old acquaintance, did my wife and me the favour to spend some days with us last summer in the country. We took the usual methods

to make their time pass agreeably ; carried them to all the Gothic and Chinese houses in the neighbourhood ; and embraced all opportunities of procuring venison, fish, and game for them : which last, by the way, it has been no easy matter to come in for since the association.

At their leaving us, they were so obliging as to say their visit had gone off very pleasantly, and hoped we would return it, by coming to see them in town. Accordingly, the mornings growing foggy, the evenings long, and this invitation running in our heads, we resolved to accept it : and arriving in town about the middle of November last, we fixed ourselves in lodgings near our friends, intending to breakfast, dine, and sup with them, for the most part, during our stay in town. But will you believe me, Mr. Fitz-Adam ? we never were more surprised in all our lives than at receiving a card the morning after our arrival (which I think was the 18th of November) from the lady of the family we came to visit, inviting us to play at cards with her on the 28th of next March. We thought at first that it must be a mistake for the 28th of November ; but upon consulting our landlady, she informed us that such invitations were very usual, and that, as we were well acquainted with the family, the lady had probably appointed the first day she was disengaged.

As my wife and I seldom play at cards, except at Christmas, we thought it scarce worth our while to wait for a game till almost Whitsuntide, and therefore very prudently set out the next day for the country ; from whence I believe we shall be in no great haste to pay a second visit to our friends in town.

I am, sir,
Your very humble servant,
HUMPHREY GUBBINS.

MR. FITZ-ADAM,

I live so much in the world, and so entirely for the world, that the very name of your paper secured me for one of your constant readers. But really if your periodical *World* continues to contradict the *beau monde* as much as it has done in two or three essays relating to us women, I shall think your sentiments fitter for the man of the Moon than the man of the World.

A little while ago you were pleased to be extremely out of humour at the nakedness of our necks; and now in your paper No. 105, you are equally offended at our covering our faces. What a capricious man you are! I apprehend, sir, that a certain quantity of nakedness has always been allowed us; and I know of no law that confines it to any particular part of our persons. If therefore we choose to stucco over our faces, you ought in reason to allow us to exhibit a little more of our necks and shoulders.

Her sagacious majesty, Queen Elizabeth, conscious of a bad complexion, and fearing that a brown neck, though right royal, might excite less admiration than the undignified alabaster of the meanest of her subjects, chose that they should conceal what herself could not equal, under innumerable folds of lawn and paint: a piece of envious cruelty, which (notwithstanding your sex have been pleased to celebrate her as the guardian of English liberty) must make her appear to ours little better than a tyrant, for having imprisoned so much British beauty in a dungeon where not the smallest spark of light could break in upon any part of it. The face indeed was still left visible by that envious queen, which is at present almost the only part of our attractions that we have thought proper to cover. You ought therefore to consider, when you find fault with our

open necks, that our faces are plastered over; and instead of complaints against our covered faces, you should rest satisfied with the ample amends we make you by our other discoveries.

I am, sir,
Your true friend, and faithful counsellor,
FARDILLA.

SIR,

I have with great seriousness and attention read over the World of the 2d of this month, which shows me my complexion in so very different a light from that in which my looking-glass has represented it, that I should instantly lay aside the roses and lilies I have purchased, and content myself with the skin wherewith nature has thought fit to cover me, if it were not for a very material consideration. The truth is, that I am to be married in a few days to a gentleman, whose fortune is above any hopes I could have conceived while in my natural sallowness; and who I find has been principally attracted by the splendour of my complexion. But you may depend on my resigning it all after the first month of my marriage: You cannot surely, Mr. Fitz-Adam, be so cruel as to deny a bride the happiness of the honeymoon: by that time, perhaps, my husband may be pretty indifferent whether I am brown or fair: if not, a change of complexion is no cause for a divorce, either by the ancient canons, or the late marriage act; so you know, sir, his approbation is of no great consequence to

Your constant reader,
MATILDA.

SIR,

To persuade your sex that black is white has been the darling wish and constant endeavour of ours; but we have never succeeded literally in this art till

we knew how to paint ourselves: I am therefore as much surprised that a man of your sense should expect to make us give up so desirable a power as that you should wish to do it.

Have not the sex in all ages, both in prose and verse, lamented the short duration of the lilies and roses that bloom on a fair skin? I have seen it set forth in such affecting strains as have drawn tears from me when a girl of eighteen, from having felt it with all the bitterness of prophetic sadness. Can there be a nobler invention than this, which substitutes so durable a bloom in the place of those transient colours, which fade almost as fast as the flower to which they are compared? This eternal spring of beauty is surely the peculiar blessing of the present age. A man might now reflect without terror on an antediluvian marriage, since his wife, after five or six hundred years of wedlock, might be as blooming as on her bridal-day. Time is the greatest enemy to the pleasures of us mortals: how glorious then is the victory, when we can baffle him in a point in which he has hitherto exerted his most cruel tyranny!

I suppose your next attack will be upon the new lustre that our necks have acquired by the same art; an improvement which cannot, in my humble opinion, be too much admired. I remember when women with the whitest necks had such an odious clearness in their skins, that you might almost see the blood circulate through their veins; an amusing spectacle indeed for a philosopher, and such perhaps as might give Doctor Harvey the first hint of the discoveries he afterwards made: but surely it could be no very agreeable sight to a person of any delicacy, when compared with the present resplendent white which every neck exhibits. Good flesh and blood is a phrase very well suited to a milk-maid; but I fancy a woman of fashion would choose to excite sublimer ideas:

and indeed our sex could never so properly assume the title of goddesses as now that we have laid aside so much of the rustic appearance of mere mortal women.

I am, sir,

Your humble servant,

BELINDA.

SIR,

I like the intention of your paper upon face-painting so well, that I shall readily comply with it, and return to the complexion that nature has bestowed upon me (which you must know is an olive), if you can persuade others to do the same. But who could bear to be the shade to an assembly, dazzling bright with borrowed lilies, to look like the corner of the moon in an eclipse? Indeed it is impossible for me to bring myself to such an excess of fortitude. An olive is a good sort of complexion for a wit, but a vile one for a beauty,—the title for which we women universally long; while that of wit is only the last resource of our vanity, when nature or age denies us all pretensions to the other.

Go on and prosper, Mr. Fitz-Adam; reduce us again to our natural colour; and you shall find I will not be the last, though I cannot bear to be the first, that shall comply.

Your most devoted,

OLIVIA BLANCHE.

No. 110. SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 5, 1755.

— *Uno avulso non deficit alter*
Aurcus, et simili frondescit virga metallo. VIRG.

THOUGH I have studied the ways of men with the strictest application for many years, I must ingenuously confess my inability to dive into the secrets of one particular society, the members of which, by their superior capacities, have hitherto enveloped themselves in an impenetrable cloud of mystery. Every body must have observed, that in all public places in this kingdom there are swarms of adventurers, who neither derive any possessions from provident ancestors, nor are of any profession, yet who figure most splendidly both in the great and small world, to the amazement of all who know them. The only answer I could ever obtain, when I have inquired how Mr. Such-a-one, a member of this society, lived, was, *The Lord knows*. Which answer one would think should imply, that *He who feedeth the ravens, and clotheth the lilies of the field*, had thus plentifully provided for them, imperceptible to the eyes of other mortals. But as the lives of these gentlemen seem to claim no such indulgence from Heaven, I should have entertained a very complaisant opinion of them, if the legislature, by the repeal of the Witch act, had not taught me to believe that our intercourse with the devil was at an end. In the midst of my doubts, the following letter gave me perfect satisfaction:

TO MR. FITZ-ADAM.

SIR,

About ten years ago the public was entertained with a very fanciful performance, entitled *Hermip-*

pus Redivivus, or the Sage's Triumph over Old Age and the Grave. Though the ingenious author modestly sets out with showing the possibility of a man's extending the plan of life to a longer space than he generally now enjoys, by inhaling the salubrious breath of unpolluted virgins; yet by degrees, almost imperceptible to the reader, he slides into the Hermetic philosophy, of which he is an enthusiastic admirer, and becomes, before the conclusion of his book, as thorough a believer in the power of the stone and universal elixir, as if he had been personally present when an adept had made projection. He introduces several most surprising stories concerning philosophers, who, being skilled in the arcanum, lived for three or four centuries in the most unimpaired vigour both of mind and body. But as the most enviable state of human felicity is imperfect, though these sages were masters of that omnipotent metal which can make knaves honest, blockheads wits, and cowards heroes; which yields, in the established commerce of the world, all the necessities, emoluments, and luxuries of life, and almost deifies its possessors, they were frequently necessitated to lead the lives of vagabonds, and to skulk from the observation of mankind in the darkest shades of obscurity.

Among many other surprising stories, he gives an account of a stranger who some time ago resided at Venice. It was very remarkable, he says, that this man, though he lived in the utmost affluence and splendor, was unacquainted with any person belonging to the city before he came thither; that he followed no trade or merchandise; that he had no property in the common funds of the state, nor ever received any remittance from abroad; yet abounded in wealth, till an accident, which he relates, drove him from Italy, from whence he suddenly disappeared, and no mortal ever learnt from what place he came, or whither he went.

If this man was an Hermetic philosopher in possession of the great secret, as the author insinuates, I am inclined to think, from a similarity of circumstances, that we have at this very time a great number of that sect in this metropolis, who, for the good of the nation, make gold at their pleasure. I have had the happiness of an acquaintance with several of these great men, who, without any visible means of livelihood, have shone forth with uncommon lustre for a time, and then, to the regret of crowds of tailors, woollen-drapers, lacemen, mercers, milliners, &c. have suddenly disappeared, and nobody ever knew the place of their retirement. This speedy retreat I attribute to their fears lest the state should discover from what source their wealth arose, and force them by its power to prostitute so sacred and inestimable a science to the destructive views of ambition.

It has been observed of several of these philosophers, that they have pretended to be of some lucrative profession or employment, in order, as is supposed, to shelter themselves from the prying eyes of certain individuals, who are apt, from I know not what old-fashioned notion, to regard very coolly those persons who, being in possession of no lands or chattels by inheritance, are unconnected with society, and do not lend a helping hand in supplying something to the real or imaginary wants of mankind. Many have affected to be thought the heirs of rich uncles or aunts in the country, from whom they were supplied with the comfortable sufficiencies for genteel life: while others have insinuated by their friends, that somebody has left them something somewhere; and so feigned that they lived (as honest people phrase it) *by their means*. But before inquiry could be made into those means (if I may have leave to borrow a scripture expression) *they went hence, and were no more seen*.

I remember, a few years ago, there was a particular

coffee-house about Covent-garden, much frequented by these adepts, which a friend of mine, a man of wit and humour, used ludicrously to call the *annual* coffee-house, as the same face was seldom observed to blow there a second time. But of late they have been cautious of raising any suspicion by assembling in too great numbers together, and are therefore dispersed through all the coffee-houses in this idle and genteel part of the city.

I would not be understood, from any thing I have said, to infer that none of this respectable sect ever take up their fixed residence in town ; for I have known several and their families who have constantly dwelt here, and who, to the astonishment of the whole circle of their acquaintance, have lived for twenty years together in great splendor and luxury, spent every year as much as their original principal fortune amounted to, and still flourish on in the same manner.

Every one in high life must, I dare say, have observed, that no people live so well as those whom the world pronounces to be *ruined*. I have known many of those ruined persons, both peers and commoners, riot in every luxury and extravagance, while the haughty owners of thousands of unmortgaged acres have repined and sickened at their superior enjoyments. In short, such has been my association of ideas of late, that when I hear any man pronounced ruined, I immediately conclude, by that expression, that he has been admitted by the fraternity into the inestimable secret of the Hermetic philosophy.

But however desirous the possessors of this first science may be of appearing to draw their subsistence from the common and vulgar supplies of land, trade, stocks, or professions, rather than have it suspected from whence their mysterious finances arise, yet such

numbers now abound of all ranks and conditions, that the government, I am told, begins to entertain an idea, or, as the vulgar phrase it, to have an inkling of the matter. Indeed I am greatly surprised that the affair was not found out sooner ; for it is mathematically demonstrable, that if Great Britain and Ireland were large enough to hold all the boasted possessions of these nominal land-owners, the dominions of his present majesty would exceed the bluster of a Spanish title, and be larger than the four quarters of the globe joined together. But here let me stop, and not endeavour to reveal more of that science, which is destined by fate to remain a secret from all but the truly initiated ; lest by farther profane babbling the present sons of Hermes should take umbrage, and transfer the unspeakable advantages that accrue to society from their presence to lands of more faith and less curiosity. I could wish, therefore, that the administration would suppress farther inquiries about these affairs, and be contented, like honest plain tradesmen, who grow rich they cannot tell how, to receive that inundation of wealth which flows so unaccountably into the kingdom, without troubling their repose by an over great solicitude to know the source it springs from ; for fear, like fairy favours, the blessing should be snatched from the land, for the unpardonable crime of endeavouring to satisfy a prohibited curiosity.

I am, sir,

Your most obedient humble servant,

A. Z.

No. 111. THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 13, 1755.

It is very well known that religion and politics are perfectly understood by every body, as they require neither study nor experience. All people therefore decide peremptorily, though often variously, upon both.

All sects, severally sure of being in the right, intimate at least, if not denounce, damnation to those who differ from them, in points so clear, so plain, and so obvious. On the other hand, the infidel, not less an enthusiast than any of them (though upon his own principles he cannot damn, because he knows to demonstration that there is no future state) would very gladly hang, as hypocrites or fools, the whole body of believers.

In politics the sects are as various and as warm: and what seems very extraordinary is, that those who have studied them the most, and experienced them the longest, always know them the least. Every administration is in the wrong, though they have the clue and secret of business in their hands; and not less than six millions of their fellow subjects (for I only except very young children) are willing and able to discover, censure, reform, and correct their errors, and put them in the right way.

These considerations, among many others, determined me originally not to meddle with religion or politics, in which I could not instruct, and upon which I thought it not decent to trifle.

Entertainment alone must be the object of an humble weekly author of a sheet and a half. A certain degree of bulk is absolutely necessary for a certain degree of dignity either in man or book. A

system of ethics, to be respected as it ought, requires at least a quarto; and even moral essays cannot decently, and with utility, appear in less than a thick octavo. But should I, in my ignoble state of a fugitive sheet and a half, presume with a grave face to censure folly, or with an angry one to lash vice, the porter of every well-bred family in town would have orders to deny me; and I should forfeit my place at the breakfast-table, where now, to my great honour and emolument, I am pretty generally served up. But if by the introduction of that wit and humour, which I believe even my enemies must allow me, I can, without offence to the politer part of readers, slide in any useful moral, I will not neglect the opportunity; for I will be witty whenever I can, and instructive whenever I dare; and when my scattered leaves shall, like the Sibyls, come to be collected, I believe I may without vanity assert, that they will be, at least, as good oracles.

But in this design too I am aware of difficulties, little inferior to those which discouraged me from meddling with religion and politics: for every body has wit and humour, and many have more of both than they, or at least their friends, know what to do with. As they are gifts of nature, not to be acquired by art, who is there that thinks himself so disinherited by nature as not to have some share of them? Nay, those (if such there are) who are modest enough to think themselves cut off with a shilling, husband that twelpence with care, and frugally spend their penny upon occasion, as sly wags, and dry jokers.

In this universal profusion, this prodigious plenty of wit and humour, I cannot help distrusting a little the success, though by no means the merit, of my own; for I have interior conviction that no man in England has so much. But tastes are various, and

the market is glutted. However, I should hope that my candid readers will have the same regard for my opinion which they have for most of the opinions they entertain; that is, that they will take it upon trust, especially as they have it *from the gentleman's own mouth*.

The better to take my measures for the future, I have endeavoured to trace the progress and reception of my paper through the several classes of its readers.

In families of condition, it is first received by the porter, who yawning, just casts his half-open eyes upon it; for it comes out so early as between ten and eleven; but finding neither the politics nor the casualties of the week in it, throws it aside, and takes up in its stead a daily newspaper, in which all those matters are related with truth and perspicuity.

From thence it is sent up to Mrs. Betty, to lay upon the breakfast-table. She receives it in pretty much the same manner, finds it deficient in point of news, and lays it down in exchange for the Daily Advertiser; when she turns with impatience to the advertisements, to see what invitations are thrown out by single gentlemen of undoubted characters, to agreeable young women of unblemished reputations, to become either their wives or their companions. And, by a prudent forecast, she particularly attends to the premiums so frequently offered for a fine wholesome breast of milk.

When it is introduced into my lady's dressing-room, it undergoes a severer examination: for if my lord and lady ever meet, it is then and there. The youngest, probably, of the young ladies is appointed to read it aloud, to use her to read at sight. If my lord, who is a judge of wit as well as of property in

the last resort, gives a favorable nod, and says, *it is well enough to-day*; my lady, who does not care to contradict him in trifles, pronounces it to be *charming*. But if unfortunately my lord, with an air of distaste, calls it *poor stuff*; my lady discovers it to be *horribly stupid*. The young family are unanimously of opinion, that the nature of Adam Fitz-Adam is a very comical one, and inquire into the meaning of the globe in the frontispiece; by which (if any body could tell them) they might get a pretty notion of geography.

In families of an inferior class, I meet with a fuller, though perhaps not a more favourable trial. My merits and demerits are freely discussed. Some think me too grave, others trifling. The mistress of the house, though she detests scandal, wishes, for example's sake only, that I would draw the characters, and expose the intrigues of the fine folks. The master wonders that I do not give the ministers a rap; and concludes that I receive hush-money. But all agree in saying, facetiously and pleasantly enough, that *The World* does not inform them how *The World* goes. This is followed by many other *bon mots*, equally ingenious, alluding to the title of my paper, and worth at least the two-pence a week that it costs.

In the city (for my paper has made its way to that end of the town, upon the supposition of its being a fashionable one in this) I am received and considered in a different light. All my general reflections upon the vices or the follies of the age are, by the ladies, supposed to be levelled at particular persons, or at least discovered to be very applicable to such and such of the quality. They are also thought to be *very put* to several of their own neighbours and acquaintances; and shrewd hints of the kind greatly

embellish the conversation of the evening. The graver and more frugal part of that opulent metropolis, who do not themselves buy, but borrow my paper of those who do, complain that, though there is generally room sufficient at the end of the last page, I never insert the price of stocks, nor of goods at Bear-key. And they are every one of them astonished how certain transactions of the court of aldermen on one hand, and of the common-council on the other, can possibly escape my animadversion, since it is impossible that they can have escaped my knowledge.

Such are the censures and difficulties to which a poor weekly author is exposed. However I have the pleasure, and something more than the pleasure, of finding that two thousand of my papers are circulated weekly. This number exceeds the largest that was ever printed even of the Spectators, which in no other respects do I pretend to equal. Such extraordinary success would be sufficient to flatter the vanity of a good author, and to turn the head of a bad one. But I prudently check and stifle those growing sentiments in my own breast, by reflecting upon other circumstances that tend to my humiliation. I must confess that the present fashion of curling the hair has proved exceeding favourable to me: and perhaps the quality of my paper, as it happens to be peculiarly adapted to that purpose, may contribute, more than its merit, to the sale of it. A head that has taken a right French turn requires, as I am assured, fourscore curls in distinct papers, and those curls must be renewed as often as the head is combed, which is perhaps once a month. Four of my papers are sufficient for that purpose, and amount only to eight-pence, which is very little more than what the same quantity of plain paper would cost. Taking it therefore all together, it seems not inconsistent with good economy to purchase it at so small a

price. This reflection might mortify me as an author, but on the other hand, self-love, which is ingenious in availing itself of the slightest favourable circumstances, comforts me with the thought, that, of the prodigious number of daily and weekly papers that are now published, mine is perhaps the only one that is ultimately applied to the head.

No. 112. THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 20, 1755.

A LATE noble author has most justly and elegantly defined custom to be, ‘The result of the passions and prejudices of many, and of the designs of a few; the ape of reason, who usurps her seat, exercises her power, and is obeyed by mankind in her stead.’

This definition enables us to account for the various absurd and wicked customs which have severally and successively prevailed in all ages and countries, and also for those which unfortunately prevail in this; for they may all be traced up to the passions and prejudices of the many, and the designs of a few.

It is certain, however, that there has not been a time when the prerogative of human reason was more freely asserted, nor errors and prejudice more ably attacked and exposed by the best writers, than now. But may not the principle of inquiry and detection be carried too far, or at least made too general? And should not a prudent discrimination of cases be attended to?

A prejudice is by no means necessarily (though

generally thought so) an error. On the contrary, it may be a most unquestioned truth, though it be still a prejudice in those who, without any examination, take it upon trust, and entertain it by habit.

There are even some prejudices, founded upon error, which ought to be connived at, or perhaps encouraged; their effects being more beneficial to society than their detection can possibly be.

Human reason, even when improved by knowledge, and undisturbed by the passions, is not an infallible, though it is our best guide: but unimproved by knowledge, and adulterated by passion, it becomes the most dangerous one: constituting obstinate wrong-headedness, and dignifying, nay, almost sanctifying error.

The bulk of mankind have neither leisure nor knowledge sufficient to reason right: why then should they be taught to reason at all? Will not honest instinct prompt, and wholesome prejudices guide them much better than half reasoning?

The power of the magistrate to punish bad, and the authority of those of superior rank to set good examples, properly exerted, would probably be of more diffusive advantage to society than the most learned theological, philosophical, moral and casuistical dissertations. As for instance:

An honest cobbler in his stall thinks and calls himself a good honest protestant; and, if he lives at the city end of the town, probably goes to his parish church on Sundays. Would it be honest, would it be wise, to say to this cobbler, 'Friend, you only think yourself a member of the church of England; but in reality you are not one, since you are only so from habit and prejudice, not from examination and reflection? But study the ablest controversial writers of the popish and reformed churches; read Bellarmine, Chillingworth, and Stillingfleet, and then you

may justly call yourself, what in truth you are not now, a protestant.'

Should our mender of shoes follow this advice (which I hope he would not), a useful cobbler would most certainly be lost in a useless polemic, and a scurvy logician.

It would be just the same thing in morals. Our cobbler received from his parents that best and shortest of all christian and moral precepts, 'do as you would be done by:' he adopted it without much examination, and scrupulously practised it in general, though with some few exceptions perhaps in his own trade. But should some philosopher, for the advancement of truth and knowledge, assure this cobbler, 'That his honesty was mere prejudice and habit, because he had never sufficiently considered the relation and fitness of things, nor contemplated the beauty of virtue; but that if he would carefully study the Characteristics, the Moral Philosopher, and thirty or forty volumes more upon that subject, he might then, and not till then, justly call himself an honest man;' what would become of the honesty of the cobbler after this useful discovery I do not know; but this I very well know, that he should no longer be my cobbler.

I shall borrow him in two instances more, and then leave him to his honest, useful, homespun prejudices, which half-knowledge and less reasoning will, I hope, never tempt him to lay aside.

My cobbler is also a politician. He reads the first newspapers he can get, desirous to be informed of the state of affairs in Europe, and of the street robberies in London. He has not, I presume, analysed the interests of the respective countries of Europe, nor deeply considered those of his own: still less is he systematically informed of the political duties of a citizen and a subject. But his heart and his habits supply those defects. He glows with zeal for the

honour and prosperity of old England; he will fight for it, if there be occasion, and drink to it perhaps a little too often, and too much. However, is it not to be wished that there were in this country six millions of such honest and zealous, though uninformed citizens?

All these unreflected and unexamined opinions of our cobbler, though prejudices in him, are in themselves undoubted and demonstrable truths, and ought therefore to be cherished even in their coarsest dress. But I shall now give an instance of a common prejudice in this country, which is the result of error, and which yet I believe no man in his senses would desire should be exposed or removed.

Our honest cobbler is thoroughly convinced, as his forefathers were for many centuries, that one Englishman can beat three Frenchmen; and in that persuasion, he would by no means decline the trial. Now, though in my own private opinion, deduced from physical principles, I am apt to believe that one Englishman could beat no more than two Frenchmen of equal strength and size with himself, I should however be very unwilling to undeceive him of that useful and sanguine error, which certainly made his countrymen triumph in the fields of Poictiers and Crecy.

But there are prejudices of a very different nature from these; prejudices not only founded on original error, but that gave birth and sanction to the most absurd, extravagant, impious and immoral customs.

Honour, that sacred name, which ought to mean the spirit, the supererogation of virtue, is, by custom, profaned, reduced, and shrunk to mean only a readiness to fight a duel upon either a real or an imaginary affront, and not to cheat at play. No vices nor immoralities whatsoever blast this fashionable character, but rather, on the contrary, dignify and adorn it:

and what should banish a man from all society recommends him in general to the best. He may, with great honour, starve the tradesmen, who by their industry supply not only his wants, but his luxury. He may debauch his friend's wife, daughter, or sister ; he may, in short, undoubtedly gratify every appetite, passion, and interest, and scatter desolation round him, if he be but ready for single combat, and a scrupulous observer of all the moral obligations of a gamester.

These are the prejudices for wit to ridicule, for satire to lash, for the rigour of the law to punish, and (which would be the most effectual of all) for fashion to discountenance and proscribe. And these shall in their turns be the subjects of some future papers.

No. 113. THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 27, 1755.

THE custom of duelling is most evidently the result of the passions of the many, and of the designs of a few ; but here the definition stops ; since, far from being the ape of reason, it prevails in open defiance of it. It is the manifest offspring of barbarity and folly, a monstrous birth, and distinguished by the most shocking and ridiculous marks of both its parents.

I would not willingly give offence to the politer part of my readers, whom I acknowledge to be my best customers, and therefore I will not so much as hint at the impiety of this practice ; nor will I labour to show how repugnant it is to instinct, reason, and every moral and social obligation, even to the fashion-

able fitness of things. Viewed on the criminal side, it excites horror; on the absurd side, it is an inexhaustible fund of ridicule. The guilt has been considered and exposed by abler pens than mine, and indeed ought to be censured with more dignity than a fugitive weekly paper can pretend to: I shall therefore content myself with ridiculing the folly of it.

The ancients most certainly have had very imperfect notions of honour, for they had none of duelling. One reads, it is true, of murders committed every now and then among the Greeks and Romans, prompted only by interest or revenge, and performed without the least Attic politeness, or Roman urbanity. No letters of gentle invitation were sent to any man to come and have his throat cut the next morning; and we may observe that Milo had not the common decency to give Clodius, the most profligate of men, the most dangerous of citizens, and his own inveterate enemy, an equal chance of destroying him.

This delicacy of sentiment, this refinement of manners, was reserved for the politer Goths, Visigoths, Ostrogoths, Vandals, &c. to introduce, cultivate, and establish. I must confess that they have generally been considered as barbarous nations; and to be sure there are some circumstances which seem to favour that opinion. They made open war upon learning, and gave no quarter even to the monuments of arts and sciences. But then it must be owned, on the other hand, that upon those ruins they established the honourable and noble science of homicide, dignified, exalted, and ascertained true honour, worshipped it as their deity, and sacrificed to it hecatombs of human victims.

In those happy days, honour, that is, single combat, was the great and unerring test of civil rights, moral actions, and sound doctrines. It was

sanctified by the church; and the churchmen were occasionally allowed the honour and pleasure of it: for we read of many instances of duels between men and priests. Nay, it was, without appeal, the infallible test of female chastity. If a princess, or any lady of distinction, was suspected of a little incontinency, some brave champion, who was commonly privy to, or perhaps the author of it, stood forth in her defence, and asserted her innocence with the point of his sword or lance. If by his activity, skill, strength, and courage, he murdered the accuser, the lady was spotless; but if her champion fell, her guilt was manifest. This heroic gallantry in defence of the fair I presume, occasioned that association of ideas (otherwise seemingly unrelative to each other) of the *brave* and the *fair*; for indeed *in those days* it behoved a lady, who had the least regard for her reputation, to choose a lover of uncommon activity, strength, and courage. This notion, as I am well assured, still prevails in many reputable families about Covent-garden, where the *brave* in the kitchen are always within call of the *fair* in the first or second floor.

By this summary method of proceeding, the quibbles, the delays, and the expense of the law were avoided, and the troublesome shackles of the gospel knocked off; honour ruling in their stead. To prove the utility and justice of this method, I cannot help mentioning a very extraordinary duel between a man of distinction and a dog, in the year 1371, in presence of King Charles the Fifth of France. Both the relation and the print of this duel are to be found in Father Montfaucon.

A gentleman of the court was supposed to have murdered another, who had been missing for some days. This suspicion arose from the mute testimony

of the absent person's dog, a large Irish greyhound, who with uncommon rage attacked this supposed murderer wherever he met him. As he was a gentleman, and a man of very nice honour (though by the way he really had murdered the man), he could not bear lying under so dishonourable a suspicion, and therefore applied to the king for leave to justify his innocence by single combat with the said dog. The king, being a great lover of justice, granted his suit, ordered lists to be made ready, appointed the time, and named the weapons. The gentleman was to have an offensive club in his hand, the dog a defensive tub to resort to occasionally. The Irish greyhound willingly met this fair inviter at the time and place appointed; for it has always been observable of that particular breed, that they have an uncommon alacrity at single combat. They fought; the dog prevailed, and almost killed the honourable gentleman, who had then the honour to confess his guilt, and of being hanged for it in a few days.

When letters, arts, and sciences revived in Europe, the science of homicide was farther cultivated and improved. If, on the one hand, it lost a little of the extent of its jurisdiction, on the other, it acquired great precision, clearness, and beauty, by the care and pains of the very best Italian and Spanish authors, who reduced it into a regular body, and delighted the world with their admirable codes, digests, pandects, and reports, *della cavalleresca*, in some hundreds of volumes. Almost all possible cases of honour were considered and stated; two-and-thirty different sorts of lies were distinguished; and the adequate satisfaction necessary for each was with great solidity and precision ascertained. A kick with a thin shoe was declared more injurious to honour (though not so painful to the part kicked)

than a kick with a thick shoe; and in short, a thousand other discoveries of the like nature, equally beneficial to society, were communicated to the world in those voluminous treasures of honour.

In the present degenerate age, these fundamental laws of honour are exploded and ridiculed; and single combat thought a very uncertain, and even unjust decision of civil property, female chastity, and criminal accusations; but I would humbly ask, why? Is not single combat as just a decision of any other thing whatsoever as it is of veracity, the case to which it is now in a manner confined? I am of opinion that there are more men in the world who lie and fight too than there are who will lie and not fight; because I believe there are more men in the world who have than who want courage. But if fighting is the test of veracity, my readers of condition will I hope pardon me when I say, that my future inquiries and researches after truth shall be altogether confined to the three regiments of guards.

There is one reason indeed which makes me suspect that a duel may not always be the infallible criterion of veracity, and that is, that the combatants very rarely meet upon equal terms. I beg leave to state a case, which may very probably, and not even unfrequently happen, and which yet is not provided for, nor even mentioned in the *Institutes of Honour*.

A very lean, slender, active young fellow, of great honour, weighing perhaps not quite twelve stone, and who has from his youth taken lessons of homicide from a murder-master, has, or thinks he has, a point of honour to discuss with an unwieldy, fat, middle-aged gentleman, of nice honour, likewise weighing four-and-twenty stone, and who in his youth may not possibly have had the same commendable appli-

cation to the noble science of homicide. The lean gentleman sends a very civil letter to the fat one, inviting him to come and be killed by him the next morning in Hyde-park. Should the fat gentleman accept this invitation, and waddle to the place appointed, he goes to inevitable slaughter. Now upon this state of the case, might not the fat gentleman, consistent with the rules of honour, return the following answer to the invitation of the lean one?

‘SIR,

‘I find by your letter that you do me the justice to believe that I have the true notions of honour that become a gentleman; and I hope I shall never give you reason to change your opinion. As I entertain the same opinion of you, I must suppose that you will not desire that we should meet upon very unequal terms, which must be the case were we to meet to-morrow. At present I unfortunately weigh four-and-twenty stone, and I guess that you do not exceed twelve. From this circumstance singly, I am doubly the mark that you are; but besides this, you are active, and I am unwieldy. I therefore propose to you, that from this day forwards we severally endeavour by all possible means, you to fatten, and I to waste, till we can meet at the medium of eighteen stone. I will lose no time on my part, being impatient to prove to you that I am not quite unworthy of the good opinion which you are pleased to express of,

‘Sir, your very humble servant.

‘P. S. I believe it may not be amiss for us to communicate to each other, from time to time, our gradations of increase or decrease, towards the desired medium, in which, I presume, two or three pounds more or less, on either side, ought not to be considered.’

This, among many other cases that I could mention, sufficiently proves, not only the expediency, but the necessity of restoring, revising, and perhaps adding to the practice, rules, and statutes of single combat, as it flourished in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries. I grant that it would probably make the common law useless; but little, trifling, and private interests ought not to stand in the way of great, public, and national advantages.

No. 114. THURSDAY, MARCH 6, 1755.

THE notion of *birth*, as it is commonly called and established by custom, is also the manifest result of the prejudices of the many, and of the designs of a few. It is the child of Pride and Folly, coupled together by that industrious pander Self-love. It is surely the strongest instance, and the weakest proof, of human vanity. If it means any thing, it means a long lineal descent from a founder, whose industry or good fortune, whose merit, or perhaps whose guilt, has enabled his posterity to live useless to society, and to transmit to theirs their pride and their patrimony. However, this extravagant notion, this chimerical advantage; the effect of blind chance, where prudence and option cannot even pretend to have the least share, is that *fly* which, by a kind of Egyptian superstition, custom all over Europe has deified, and at whose tawdry shrine good sense, good manners, and good nature are daily sacrificed.

The vulgar distinction between people of *birth* and people of *no birth* will probably puzzle the critics and antiquarians of the thirtieth or fortieth centuries,

when in their judicious or laborious researches into the customs and manners of these present times, they shall have reason to suppose, that in the sixteenth, seventeenth, and eighteenth centuries, the island of Great Britain was inhabited by two sorts of people, some *born*, but the much greater number *unborn*. The fact will appear so *incredible*, that it will certainly be *believed*; the only difficulty will be how to account for it; and that, as it commonly does, will engross the attention of the learned. The case of Cadmus's men will doubtless be urged, as a case in point, to prove the possibility of the thing; and the truth of it will be confirmed by the records of the university of Oxford, where it will appear that an unborn person, called for that reason *Terræ Filius*, annually entertained that university with an oration in the theatre.

I therefore take with pleasure this opportunity of explaining and clearing up this difficulty to my remotest successors in the republic of letters, by giving them the true meaning of the several expressions of *great birth*, *noble birth*, *birth*, and *no birth at all*.

Great and illustrious *birth* is ascertained and authenticated by a pedigree carefully preserved in the family, which takes at least an hour's time to unroll, and when unrolled discloses twenty intermarriages of valiant and puissant Geoffreys and Hildebrands, with as many chaste and pious Blanches and Mauds, before the Conquest, not without here and there a dash of the Plantagenets. But if unfortunately the insolent worms should have devoured the pedigree as well as the persons of the illustrious family, that defect may be supplied by the authentic records of the Heralds' Office, that inestimable repository of good sense and useful knowledge. If this *great birth* is graced with a peerage, so much the better; but if

not, it is no great matter ; for being so solid a good in itself, it wants no borrowed advantages, and is unquestionably the most pleasing sentiment that a truly generous mind is capable of feeling.

Noble birth implies only a peerage in the family. Ancestors are by no means necessary for this kind of birth ; the patent is the midwife of it, and the very first descent is noble. The family arms, however modern, are dignified by the coronet and mantle ; but the family livery is sometimes, for very good reasons, laid aside.

Birth, singly, and without an epithet, extends, I cannot positively say how far, but negatively, it stops where useful arts and industry begin. Merchants, tradesmen, yeomen, farmers, and ploughmen, are not *born*, or at least, in so mean a way as not to deserve that name ; and it is perhaps for that reason that their mothers are said to be *delivered*, rather than *brought to bed* of them. But baronets, knights, and esquires have the honour of being *born*.

I must confess that before I got the key to this fashionable language, I was a good deal puzzled myself with the distinction between *birth*, and *no birth* ; and having no other guide than my own weak reason, I mistook the matter most grossly. I foolishly imagined that *well-born* meant born with a sound mind in a sound body ; a healthy, strong constitution, joined to a good heart and a good understanding. But I never suspected that it could possibly mean the shrivelled tasteless fruit of an old genealogical tree. I communicated my doubts, and applied for information to my late worthy and curious friend, the celebrated Mrs. Kennon, whose valuable collection of fossils and minerals, lately sold, sufficiently proves her skill and researches in the most recondite parts of nature. She, with that frankness and humanity which were

natural to her, assured me that it was all a vulgar error, in which however the nobility and gentry prided themselves: but that in truth she had never observed the children of the quality to be wholesomer and stronger than others, but rather the contrary: which difference she imputed to certain causes, which I shall not here specify. This natural (and, I dare say, to the best of her observation, true) account confirmed me in my former philosophical error. But still not thoroughly satisfied with it, and thinking that there must be something more in what was so universally valued, I determined to get some farther information, by addressing myself to a person of vast, immense, prodigious *birth*, and descended *atavis regibus*, with whom I had the honour of being acquainted. As he expatiates willingly upon that subject, it was very easy for me to set him a going upon it, inasmuch, that upon some few doubts which I humbly suggested to him, he spoke to me in the following manner:

‘ I believe, Mr. Fitz-Adam, you are not (for nobody is) ignorant of the antiquity of my family, which by authentic records I can trace up to King Alfred, some of whose blood runs at this moment in my veins: and I will not conceal from you that I find infinite inward comfort and satisfaction in that reflection. Let people of *no birth* laugh as much as they please at these notions; they are not imaginary; they are real; they are solid; and whoever is *well born* is glad that he is so. A merchant, a tradesman, a yeoman, a farmer, and such sort of people, may perhaps have common honesty and vulgar virtues; but take my word for it, the more refined and generous sentiments of honour, courage, and magnanimity, can only flow in ancient and noble blood. What shall animate a tradesman or mean-born

man to any great and heroic virtues? Shall it be the examples of his ancestors? He has none. Or shall it be that impure blood that rather stagnates than circulates in his veins? No; ancient birth and noble blood are the only true sources of great virtues. This truth appears even among brutes, who we observe never degenerate, except in cases of mis-alliances with their inferiors. Are not the pedigrees of horses, cocks, dogs, &c. carefully preserved, as the never-failing proofs of their swiftness and courage? I repeat it again, *birth* is an inestimable advantage, not to be adequately understood but by those who have it.'

My friend was going on, and, to say the truth, growing dull, when I took the liberty of interrupting him, by acknowledging that the cogency of his arguments, and the self-evidence of his facts, had entirely removed all my doubts, and convinced me of the unspeakable advantages of illustrious birth: and unfortunately I added, that my own vanity was greatly flattered by it, in consequence of my being lineally descended from the first man. Upon this my friend looked grave, and seemed rather displeased; whether from a suspicion that I was jesting, or upon an apprehension that I meant to *out-descend* him, I cannot determine; for he contented himself with saying, 'That is not a necessary consequence, neither, Mr. Fitz-Adam, since I have read somewhere or other of pre-adamites, which opinion did not seem to me an absurd one.'

Here I took my leave of him, and went home full of reflections upon the astonishing powers of self-love, that can extract comfort and pleasure from such groundless, absurd, and extravagant prejudices. In all other respects my friend is neither a fool nor a madman, and can talk very rationally upon any rational subject. But such is the inconsistency both of

the human mind and the human heart, that one must not form a general judgment of either, from one glaring error, or one shining excellence.

No. 115. THURSDAY, MARCH 13, 1755.

THOUGH it is a general observation, that the actions of mankind commonly begin and end in *self*, yet to an impartial person, who reads over with attention the advertisements in our public papers, it will appear that there are instances of public-spiritedness in the present times, that put to shame every record that can be produced in favour of times past: and though I am sorry to say that these instances are confined to one particular profession of men, yet the benefits that accrue from them are general and universal. Not to keep my readers in suspense, the public-spirited gentlemen I mean, are the gentlemen of the faculty, or, as they more modestly call themselves, the practitioners in physic. The disinterested zeal with which these gentlemen devote their labours to the good of mankind ought, I confess, to be celebrated by much abler pens than mine; and happy indeed is it that they themselves seem to think so, and have therefore done that justice to their own merits which their warmest advocates must have despaired of doing for them.

The most illustrious Doctor de Cortese, physician of the most serene republic of Venice, has abandoned his native country and friends, and with the no less illustrious Doctor Toscano, his colleague, has generously taken up his residence in this metropolis, where diseases and death fly before him.

A physician of our own nation challenges the regard of his countrymen, by politely and elegantly setting forth in the daily papers, that 'As nothing is more repugnant to humanity than denying relief to a fellow creature in misery, applause surely is most due to those who, by long study and great application, have extracted a medicine from the vegetable and mineral creation, that infallibly cures,' &c.

The truly disinterested proprietor of the Old Iron Pear-tree Water and its Salts condescends to do himself the justice to acknowledge his great benevolence to mankind, by prefacing his address to the public in the following words, 'That the unhappy may know where to apply for relief, is the full end of this advertisement.'

The gentleman of much experience in physic, who has discovered the celebrated lotion or wash that makes every body beautiful, tells us, 'That for the conveniency of persons of distinction, and the general good of mankind, it is sold at Mr. Foy's china-shop, opposite St. James's palace.'

Who is there that can read that does not look with admiration and astonishment on the disinterested benevolence of these truly great persons? But when we consider a still greater instance of public-spiritedness; when we think of that justly celebrated great man and physician, the incomparable Doctor Taylor, who, not satisfied with restoring the invaluable blessing of sight to every individual of his blind countrymen, pays his charitable visits to every part of Europe, dealing light and comfort to all nations; where shall we find words to express the ideas we are filled with? It is with great pleasure that I embrace this opportunity of congratulating his holiness the pope, and their eminences the cardinals, on the arrival of that illustrious person at Rome,

of which the Daily Advertiser thus particularly informs us :

‘ Rome, December 27. The Chevalier Taylor, celebrated medicine-oculist to their imperial majesties, to the kings of Great-Britain, Poland, Sweden, Denmark, and to all the sovereign princes in Europe, arrived a few weeks since in this capital from Muscovy, and the morning after his arrival was presented to his holiness. From the reputation he has acquired here by the success he had with the princesses of Ruspuly, Justinana, and with many other illustrious personages, together with a number extraordinary of the subjects of this country, the pope has not only been pleased to grant him three different audiences, but has declared him, by patent, medicine-oculist to his person and court ; and, to give him yet a greater mark of his favour, has caused him to be made Chevalier of his court, to be received as a member of the Roman senate, and fellow of the Roman university. The patents of these dignities, together with all the others he has received from the courts and universities abroad, are in the hands of his son in London. By a list it appears, that the Chevalier is now physician-oculist (by patent) to six crowned heads ; to near twenty sovereign princes ; member of almost all the universities, academies, and societies of the learned in Europe ; that he is the author of twenty-four different works that he has wrote himself in different languages, three of which are published in Italian ; and to complete all, he was received as a member of the university of Padua, by order of the senate of Venice, with distinct approbation from the famous Professor Morgagni ; and this crowned by the dignities he has received from the court and senate of Rome. The Chevalier will direct his course through Italy, where he will end his tour through all Europe.

I have transcribed the whole of this advertisement (which possibly may not appear to be quite as accurately worded as if drawn up by the doctor himself) because I am desirous of rescuing from a perishable newspaper the authentic records of the dignities and honours of the Chevalier Taylor. I cannot conceal from my readers that I have one melancholy thought upon this occasion; it is, that as most of these high honours have been conferred upon the Chevalier by the catholic princes, and particularly by his holiness the pope, it is greatly to be feared that, from a principle of gratitude, the Chevalier may possibly have made them a compliment of his protestant faith. If my apprehensions of this event are groundless, how ought we to rejoice that such distinguished titles are bestowed, even by the enemies of our religion, upon one of our own countrymen!

Indeed, as the principal blessing of life is health, it is no wonder that princes and great men are so ready to reward with honours all those who are the insurers of it: and it is with no small satisfaction that I see those eminent physicians, Doctor Rock, Doctor West, together with a long *et cætera* of doctors who content themselves with publishing their merits without their names, offering their several specifics to the public, under a patent from the crown.

But it is the disinterested spirit of these great persons, and not their honours, that I am at present celebrating: and I take shame to myself, that as an author, and consequently a physician of the mind, I have been less careful in setting forth either the excellency of my labours, or in extending them as I ought to have done to all sorts of people. I had never considered till very lately, that the paper of the World, though it cost no more than two-pence, and

is published but once a week, yet when continued to a hundred thousand numbers, or perhaps to the end of time, (for I have taken care that the secret of writing it shall not die with me), must be too heavy a tax on the generations of the poor. From a due consideration of this weighty affair, and influenced thereto by the noble and disinterested spirit of my brethren the doctors, I have directed my good friend Mr. Dodsley to bind up in three neat pocket volumes the aggregate of these my labours, for the years one thousand seven hundred fifty-three, and one thousand seven hundred fifty-four; and to distribute the said volumes among all the booksellers of this great metropolis, to be sold by them to-morrow and for ever at so small a price as three shillings a volume. And I have the pleasure of declaring, with equal truth with the proprietor of the Old Iron Pear-tree Water and its Salts, *that to relieve the unhappy is the full end of this publication.*

For the great utility of these incomparable volumes, I might refer the reader to the praises I have almost every where bestowed upon them in the volumes themselves, though, I confess, not altogether in so ample a manner as their merits required. I might also have presented him with a list of attestations sent me under the hands and seals of most of the principal nobility of these kingdoms, setting forth their marvellous effects on their morals and understandings: but as these attestations would have made a much larger work than the volumes themselves, I thought it prudent to omit them. In fact, nothing need be said of these books, but that they are an easy, pleasant, and infallible cure for every disorder of the human mind.

I had written thus far, when I received a visit from a friend, who, upon my acquainting him with the public-spirited scheme which I have laid before my

readers, shook his head, and told me, that an author of his acquaintance had greatly out-done me in generosity; of which he could convince me in an hour's time. He then left me abruptly, without so much as waiting for an answer, and, in less than the time proposed, sent me the following advertisement, cut out of a newspaper. ' This day was published, Nurse Truelove's New-year's Gift, or the book of books for children, adorned with cuts, and designed as a present for every little boy who would become a great man, and ride upon a fine horse; and to every little girl who would become a great woman, and ride in a lord mayor's gilt coach. Printed for the author, who has ordered these books to be given *gratis* to all little good boys and girls, at the Bible and Crown in St. Paul's Church-yard, they paying for the binding, which is only two-pence each book.'

I confess very freely that the generosity of this advertisement put me a little out of countenance; but as I pique myself upon nothing so much as my benevolence to mankind, I soon came to a resolution not to be out-done by this public-spirited gentleman; and I hereby give notice, that the above-mentioned three volumes of the *World*, together with a very elaborate index to each (all of which were, I confess, intended to be *sold*), will now be given *gratis* at every bookseller's shop in town, to all sorts of persons, *they only paying nine shillings for the binding.*

No. 116. THURSDAY, MARCH 20, 1755.

Personam, thyrsumque tenent, et subligar Acci. JUV.

TO MR. FITZ-ADAM.

SIR,

I AM left guardian to three young ladies, whose father was my intimate acquaintance at the time he made his addresses to their late mother: and I very well remember he could not obtain admittance till he had first procured himself the ornament of a star and ribbon, and would never have gained the lady but from the happy thought of adding another lace to his liveries. As it appeared to me that his success was owing to these exteriors, I conceived no great opinion of the good sense of his lady; but as she made my friend a good wife, I reflected that she might justly be influenced by the ribbon, as it marked the consequence of her lover, and by the additional lace, as it seemed to bespeak his riches. It is, however, still a doubt with me, whether she ever felt a sincere passion for the man she married; and what increases this doubt is, that I could never discover in either of her daughters any symptoms of what I can properly call love. The eldest, who reads romances, is continually professing a sincere disposition to requite (after a proper time) the pains of one who shall enterprise, fight, starve, or catch cold for her. The second would be happy with a scarecrow, who, with the dignity of a title, should discover what she calls a taste, in tricking out his person with embroidery, laces, jewels, and trinkets. The third would never desire to see the object of her passion; provided she

might receive reams of paper filled with flames, darts, arrows, and such missive weapons, which do most execution from a distance. Last week my three wards came into my room, desiring leave to go to the next masquerade. I gave a hasty consent, imagining there could be no danger for ladies whom I knew to be safe on the side of love; but since I have recollected my thoughts, I am apprehensive that the eldest may be caught by some *aventurier*, with sounding language and a romantic habit; the second by a Turkish emperor not worth ten chequins; and the youngest by a smooth-tongued flattering poet, who, when he has pulled off his borrowed habit of a shepherd, has perhaps no other to put on.

You will not be surprised, after this representation, to hear me complain of the distress my promise has brought upon me; but as I never break my word with them, I must for once trust them to their fate. But I cannot forbear entreating you, while the impression is strong in my rash mind, to write a paper on the dangerous consequences which these fantastic diversions may bring upon young people, by giving a wild and extravagant turn to their imaginations. You will perhaps wonder to hear the effects which my consent has already produced. This morning I found the eldest of my young ladies dressed out, as she told me, in the character of Cyrus, in a suit of Persian armour of her own contrivance. The second, who is of a large size, and has contracted a remarkable unwieldiness by the state she observes in never moving off her couch, was at the same time under the hands of one of the dancers at the theatre, who was lacing her up in a habit made after that which she wears herself in one of her serious dances. The youngest was a Muse, and expressed great satisfaction in the negligent flow of her robe, but complained that she had not *settled her head*. I could

not help saying I was sorry I had contributed my part to the *unsettling* it. This was very ill received ; which indeed I might have foreseen, as well from the opposition which it implied to her diversion, as because the muse, of all things in the world, detests a pun.

This, Mr. Fitz-Adam, is a very ominous beginning of an affair, which I am afraid will have a worse end. If it be attended with any of the consequences which I apprehend, you shall hear farther from me ; in the mean time, I hope to hear from you on this subject, and am,

Sir,

Your humble servant,

PRUDENTIO.

As I have received no farther intelligence from this correspondent, and as it is now near a month since this letter came to hand, I am apt to think that none of those dreadful consequences have happened, which he so greatly apprehended, and that the three ladies escaped without any other accident than now and then a laugh at their affectation.

I must confess I am one of those who think a masquerade an innocent amusement, and that people have long since left off going to it with any design either good or bad ; not that the vices objected to it are left off, but that they are carried on with less difficulty in other places, and without the suspicion that would attend them there. And I may venture to say, if people will keep from the dangers of the gaming-table, they will run no other hazard at the masquerade than that of making themselves ridiculous. I will go still farther, by protesting against the injustice of charging this diversion in particular with the mischiefs of play, or the affected follies men-

tioned in my correspondent's letter, by supposing that the men game higher, or that the women dress more fantastically, in the Haymarket than elsewhere. That it is an unprofitable amusement, and not worth the anxiety and pains that are usually bestowed upon it, I very readily acknowledge, but have nothing farther to say against it.

And here I cannot help observing, for the information of the declaimer against the present times, that our ancestors bestowed more thought and trouble on their elaborate fooleries of this kind than their posterity have done since; and that they were sometimes attended with more dangerous consequences. Witness the famous *Ballet des Ardens*, where Charles the Sixth of France and several young gentlemen of his court, in order to represent savages, endeavoured to imitate hair by sticking flax upon their close jackets of canvas, which were besmeared for that purpose with pitch and other inflammable matter, and all, excepting the king, chained themselves together so fast, that a spark of fire from a flambeau falling upon one of their dresses, burnt two of them to death before they could be separated, and scorched the others so that the greatest part of them died in a few days.

Henry the Eighth was the first who brought these diversions into England; and as they were very amusing from their novelty, they were frequently exhibited in that reign with great success. It is perhaps to a building erected by that monarch for an occasional masquerade that the first idea of Ranelagh owes its birth. It will not, I believe, be denied, that the modern Ranelagh is rather an improvement upon the old one; a description of which, together with the disaster that befel it, is thus particularly set forth by the historian of those times.

‘The king caused to be builded a banqueting-

house, eight hundred feet in compass, like a theatre, after a goodly device, builded in such a manner as (I think) was never seen. And in the midst of the same banqueting-house was set up a great pillar of timber, made of eight great masts, bound together with iron bands for to hold them together: for it was a hundred and thirty-four feet in length, and cost six pounds thirteen shillings and four-pence, to set it upright. The banqueting-house was covered over with canvas, fastened with ropes and iron as fast as might be devised; and within the said house was painted the heavens, with stars, sun, moon, and clouds, with divers other things made above over men's heads. And about the high pillar of timber that stood upright in the midst, was made stages of timber for organs and other instruments to stand upon, and men to play on them. But in the morning of the same day, wherein the building was accomplished, the wind began to rise, and at night blew off the canvas, and all the elements, with the stars, sun, moon, and clouds; and all the king's seats that were made with great riches, besides all other things, were all dashed and lost.'

Thus fell the first Ranelagh, though built (according to this historian) as strong as could be devised. The modern Ranelagh has proved itself to be a stronger building, having as yet been affected by no storms but those of the legislature; and (if our magistrates had thought proper) we might still have challenged all Europe to show us the diversion of a masquerade in the perfection with which it was there exhibited, either for the spaciousness of the room, the beauty of the ladies, the splendor of their jewels, or the elegance of their habits. That the choice of the latter may no longer be a torture to the invention, or occasion the same hurry, embarrassment, and disappointment that I am told

have happened on some late occasions, it may be proper to take notice that my ingenious and accurate friend, Mr. Jefferys, of St. Martin's-lane, is now engraving select representations of the most approved modes of dress of all those nations who have discovered either taste or fancy in that science. And I hope that in this undertaking he will acquit himself as well to the polite world as he has to the commercial, by the great care and pains he has bestowed in ascertaining the geography of those parts of the globe with which this country is most particularly connected, and which may sometimes furnish topics for conversation to the full as entertaining as the most earnest preparations for a subscription masquerade.

No. 117. THURSDAY, MARCH 27, 1755.

In nova fert animus. OVID.

THERE is perhaps no passion which more strongly marks the general character of mankind, which operates more forcibly, or actuates more universally, than the desire of *novelty*. Its effects appear conspicuous in proportion as every age or nation is advanced in those refinements which are the natural consequence of an extensive intercourse with other countries, and of wealth, security, and ease, under the lenity of a free government.

The Athenians, the most polished nation in all antiquity, and who enjoyed these advantages in the highest degree, were, if we may trust their own writers, as passionately fond of the *something new* as my own countrymen can possibly be; nay, far exceeded them: for however great may be the expense to

which we have pushed our invention of fresh objects for the public amusement, yet we must yield the superiority, no less in extravagance than we do in taste, to a people, who expended the treasure which was destined to clothe and feed an army, or to man a fleet, on diversions and entertainments at home. It may surprise some of our gayest moderns to inform them, that without *ridottos*, masquerades, and operas, the charge only of acting three tragedies of Sophocles amounted to the sum total of the supplies raised for the service of the republic in a general war.

The passion for novelty, as it acts on different subjects, has very different consequences. When religion or government are its objects, it is the source of most terrible evils. New men and new models have been the dread of the wisest politicians; and when things are tolerably well, to maintain them upon the old footing has been generally thought the safest maxim for the happiness of the community. Too great a desire of novelty, either in the governed, or in the governing, has often disturbed the peace of kingdoms. When it goes no farther than to decide the dress of the person, or the ornaments of our equipage, all is safe; its highest degree of excess will then only afford a subject of ridicule: a smart cocked hat, or embroidered sleeve, a short petticoat, or well-fancied furbelow, will neither endanger the church nor embroil the state. The pursuit indeed of such kind of novelties may rather occasion many advantages to the public; while that vanity which is absurd in the particular, is useful in the general. Novelty and fashion are the source and support of trade, by constantly supplying matter for the employment of industry. By increasing the wants, they increase the connexions of mankind; and so

long as they do not, by too great an extravagance, defeat their own end, in disabling the rich from paying the reward of that industry to the poor, they answer excellent purposes to society.

Not only the improvements of every invention for the convenience and ease of life, but even of those which constitute its real ornament, are owing to this desire of novelty. Yet here too we may grow wanton; and nature seems to have set us bounds, which we cannot pass without running into great absurdities. For the very principle which has contributed to the perfection of the finer arts may become the cause of their degeneracy and corruption. The search of their *something new* has step by step conducted mankind to the discovery of all that is truly beautiful in those arts; and the same search (for the desire of novelty never stops) already begins to urge us beyond that point to which a just taste should always confine itself.

Hence it is that musical composition ceases to be admired merely for touching the passions, and for changing the emotions of the heart from the soft to the strong, from the amorous to the fierce, or from the gay to the melancholy, and only seems to be then considered as highly excellent, when it impresses us with the idea of difficulty in the execution.

Images unnatural and unconnected, and a style quaint and embarrassed with its own pomp, but void of meaning and sentiment, will always be the consequence of endeavouring, in the same way, to introduce a new taste into poetry. Hence it will become vehement without strength, and ornamented without beauty; and the native, warm, and soft winning language of that amiable mistress will cease to please her more judicious lovers by an affectation of pleasing only in a new manner,

Strange as it may appear that this should find admirers, yet it is not any more to be wondered at than the applause which is so fondly given to Chinese decorations, or to the barbarous productions of a Gothic genius, which seems once more to threaten the ruin of that simplicity which distinguished the Greek and Roman arts as eternally superior to those of every other nation.

Few men are endued with a just taste; that is, with an aptitude to discover what is proper, fit, and right, and consequently beautiful, in the several objects which offer themselves to their view. Though beauty in these external objects, like truth in those of the understanding, is self-evident and immutable, yet, like truth, it may be seen perversely, or not at all, because not considered. Now all men are equally struck with the novelty of an appearance; but few, after this first emotion, call in their judgment to correct the decision of their eye, and to tell them whether the pleasure they feel has any other cause than mere novelty. It is certain that a frequent review and comparing of the same objects together would greatly improve an indifferent taste; and that hardly any one would be unable to determine, when once accustomed to such an attention, whether the proportions of architecture taken from the theatre of Marcellus at Rome, or from the emperor of China's palace at Pekin, produced the most agreeable forms.

The present vogue of Chinese and Gothic architecture has, besides its novelty, another cause of its good reception; which is, that there is no difficulty in being merely whimsical. A spirit capable of entering into all the beauties of antique simplicity is the portion of minds used to reflection, and the result of a corrected judgment: but here all men are equal. A manner confined to no rules cannot fail of having the crowd of imitators in his party, where novelty is

the sole criterion of elegance. It is no objection that the very end of all building is forgot; that all reference to use and climate, all relation of one proportion to another, of the thing supporting to the thing supported, of the accessory to the principal, and of the parts to the whole, is often entirely subverted.

The paintings, which, like the architecture, continually revolt against the truth of things, as little surely deserve the name of elegant. False lights, false shadows, false perspective and proportions, gay colours, without that gradation of tints, that mutual variety of enlightened and darkened objects, which relieve and give force to each other at the same time that they give repose to the eye, in short, every incoherent combination of forms in nature, without expression and without meaning, are the essentials of Chinese painting.

As this Chinese and Gothic spirit has begun to deform some of the finest streets in this capital, whenever an academy shall be founded for the promoting the arts of sculpture, painting, and architecture, some scheme should be thought of at the same time to discourage the encroachment of this pretended elegance; and an Anti-Chinese society will be a much more important institution in the world of arts than an Anti-Gallican in that of politics. A correspondent of mine, I dare say, would be glad to be a member of it, if we may be allowed to judge of his sentiments from the following letter:

MR. FITZ-ADAM,

I am married to a lady of great fortune, of which, as I had little or none myself, she has reserved the sole disposition to her own management by the marriage articles. She is passionately fond of novelty, and changes her dress and furniture as often almost as she does her temper. In short, every thing about

her is a proof of her mutability. She has not more new head-dresses in a year than new words, which she is perpetually coining, because she would pass for a wit. The unintelligibility of her dialect occasions sometimes great confusion in the family; and her acquaintance no sooner begin to understand her, than she changes her phraseology, and they are puzzled again by a new mode of expression. She came home the other morning from a visit, in raptures with Lady Fiddlefaddle's Chinese dressing-room; since which we have had most terrible revolutions. Her grandfather, who left her every thing, was a man celebrated for his taste; but his fine collection of pictures, by the best Italian masters, is now converted into Indian paintings; and the beautiful vases, busts, and statues, which he brought from Italy, are flung into the garret as lumber, to make room for great-bellied Chinese pagods, red dragons, and the representation of the ugliest monsters that ever, or rather never existed. This extravagance is not confined within doors. The garden is filled with whimsical buildings, at a prodigious expense; with summer-houses without shade, and with temples that seem to be dedicated to no other deities than the winds. If by reading your paper she should be persuaded to leave off every Chinese fashion, but that of pinched feet and not stirring abroad, I should think myself a happy man, and very much, Mr. Fitz-Adam,

Your obliged humble servant.

No. 118. THURSDAY, APRIL 3, 1755.

Vicinas urbes alit. Hon.

INSTEAD of lamenting that it is my lot to live in an age when virtue, sense, conversation, all private and public affections, are totally swallowed up by the single predominant passion of gaming, I endeavour to divert my concern by turning my attention to the manners of the times, where they happen to be more elegant, more natural, or more generally useful than those of preceding ages. I am particularly pleased with considering the progress which a just taste and real good sense have made in the modern mode of gardening. This science is at present founded on such noble and liberal principles, that the very traveller now receives more advantages from the embellishments he rides by than the visitor did formerly, when art and privacy were the only ideas annexed to a garden.

The modern art of laying out ground (for so we must call it, till a new name be adopted to express so complicated an idea) has spread so widely, and its province is become so extensive, as to take in all the advantages of gardening and agriculture. If we look back to antiquity, we shall find the gardens of Alcinous in Homer, and the paintings of rural scenery in Virgil, hardly to correspond with the genius of the poets, or the beatitude they have placed in them. The villas of Cicero and Pliny, which they have so affectionately described, do not raise our admiration. A favourable aspect, variety of porticos and shades of plane trees, seem to be their greatest merit. Their successors in that

happy climate have made their gardens repositories for statues, bas relievos, urns, and whatever is by them entitled *virtu*; the disposition of which ornaments, together with some straight walks of ever-green oaks, and tricks in water, complete their system.

In France the genius of Le Nautre would probably have shown itself in more beautiful productions than the Thuilleries and Versailles, had it not been shackled by lines and regularity, and had not elegance and taste been over-laid by magnificence.

This forced taste, aggravated by some Dutch acquisitions, for more than half a century deformed the face of nature in this country, though several of our best writers had conceived nobler ideas, and prepared the way for those improvements which have since followed. Sir William Temple, in his Gardens of Epicurus, expatiates with great pleasure on that at More-Park in Hertfordshire; yet after he has extolled it as the pattern of a perfect garden for use, beauty, and magnificence, he rises to nobler images, and in a kind of prophetic spirit points out a higher style, free and unconfined. The prediction is verified upon the spot; and it seems to have been the peculiar destiny of that delightful place to have passed through all the transformations and modes of taste, having exercised the genius of the most eminent artists successively, and serving as a model of perfection in each kind. The boundless imagination of Milton, in the fourth book of Paradise Lost, struck out a plan of a garden, which I would propose for the entertainment and instruction of my readers, as containing all the views, objects, and ambition of modern designing.

It is the peculiar happiness of this age to see these just and noble ideas brought into practice, regularity

banished, prospects opened, the country called in, nature rescued and improved, and art decently concealing herself under her own perfections.

I enlarge upon this subject, because I would do justice to our nobility and men of fortune, who, by a seasonable employment of the poor, have made this their private amusement a national good. It is notorious that in the season of the harvest the scarcity of hands to gather in the fruits of the earth is so great, that few of our farmers can find men to do their work for three months, unless they can keep them in employment the other nine. Here the new mode of gardening comes in greatly to the assistance of the labourer; and as it consists chiefly in the removal of earth, the whole cost goes directly to his support.

It has been the constant cry of all politicians and writers on trade, that taxes should be laid on luxury. How happy is it that luxury should take so large a share in the payment of that tax, which lies most heavy on the present times! I mean the poor-rates. Our manufactures, it must be granted, are of the greatest national benefit; inasmuch as they maintain multitudes of families, which all the private fortunes in a country would be insufficient to support. But the fact is, that in the harvest season there is always the greatest scarcity of husbandmen in those countries where manufactures are most known to flourish; and it is also a fact, that our manufactures afford no support to the husbandman in the other seasons: so that I know of nothing that can procure to him the necessaries of life in the winter but the judicious allotment of that uncomfortable season to the works above-mentioned, which are now carrying on with vigour in almost every part of England.

I must also do our men of taste the justice to acknowledge, that they have been the chief promoters even of our manufactures. One of the first embellishers of the gardens in the present mode was the same nobleman who established the looms for the carpets at Wilton. In the north, whole countries have been civilized, industry encouraged, and variety of manufactures instituted by the magnificent charity of the noble person, who among the least of his perfections must be allowed to be the best planter in Europe. And if ever this country should boast the establishment of the art of weaving tapestry, she will be beholden to the same royal hand to which she owes (if I may name it after the exalted blessings of liberty and peace) the adorning Windsor park.

Whatever may have been reported, whether truly or falsely, of the Chinese gardens, it is certain that we are the first of the Europeans who have founded this taste; and we have been so fortunate in the genius of those who have had the direction of some of our finest spots of ground, that we may now boast a success equal to that profusion of expense which has been destined to promote the rapid progress of this happy enthusiasm. Our gardens are already the astonishment of foreigners, and, in proportion as they accustom themselves to consider and understand them, will become their admiration. And as the good taste of our writers has lately invited the literati from all parts of Europe to visit us, this other taste will greatly contribute to make the growing fashion of travelling to England more general; and by this means we may hope to see part of those sums brought back again, which this country has been from year to year so unprofitably drained of.

But to set this science in the strongest light of a

political benefit, let us consider what pains have been unsuccessfully taken for many years past by the best patriots of Spain, to introduce, not only manufactures, but even agriculture itself, among the starving inhabitants. These conceited Quixotes, who please themselves with boasting that the sun is continually enlightening some part of their dominions, are so satisfied with this important reflection, that they seem to desire no other advantage from his beams. Uztariz, their latest and best writer on commerce, has bestowed whole pages in describing the wretched condition of families, the mortality of weakly children, the present race useless, the growing hope cut off, and all this because the inhabitants cannot be persuaded to use the most obvious means for their sustenance and preservation, the tilling of the earth. Yet there is a way to induce even the proudest Spaniard to apply himself earnestly to the cultivation of his country: I mean by the force of example. If the *grandees* would make it a fashion; if they would talk as one may frequently hear the first men of this nation, of the various methods of improving land, and pique themselves upon their success in husbandry, the imitative pride of the yeoman might be usefully turned into another channel. He would be ambitious of having his fields as green as these of his neighbour; he would then take his stately strides at the tail of his plough, and (as Addison says of Virgil) ‘throw about his dung with an air of majesty.’ He would then find a nobler use for the breed of cattle than the romantic purpose of a bull-feast; and his vanity, thus properly directed, would in a few years make his country the finest garden in the universe.

If the noble duke who clothed the sands of Claremont with such exquisite verdure had made the

same glorious experiment in Spain, he would have brought no less riches, and much more happiness to that nation, than the conquests of Philip, or the discoveries of Columbus.

No. 119. THURSDAY, APRIL 10, 1755.

*Sanctius his animal, mentisque capacius altæ
Decrat adhuc, & quod dominari in cætera possit.*

OVID.

It has been hinted to me since the publication of my last week's paper upon gardening, that while I am acknowledging the merits of the great in making that science useful to their poor neighbours and the public, I forget to make mention of those liberal geniuses, under whose immediate direction all these improvements are carried on, while their benevolent patrons are employed in other services to their country in its capital. And as I am never backward in doing justice to men of merit, I have devoted this paper to the celebration of the extensive and various talents, which the almost omniscient professors of gardening may so justly boast.

The good old English nobleman or country squire, whose delight was a garden, used to take from the tail of the plough a set of animals whom he considered as beings of the same order with those who drew it; and setting them to work by the garden line, was far from thinking what they were to do could be of importance enough to require his attention; therefore leaving them to lean over their spades, and settle their several plans for poaching, wood-stealing, skittle-playing and psalm-

singing, he went and enjoyed himself with his dogs and horses. But since we have laid aside that plain and easy direction, 'Follow the straight line,' and have in its stead substituted that exceeding difficult one, 'Follow nature,' the above-mentioned animals have never been trusted a moment to themselves, but have had a creature of a superior kind set over them, whose office is best explained by the scolloping-wheel in the machines for turning, which is continually putting the others out of their course, and preventing them from making circles, or any other regular figures.

This office is of late grown so respectable, that the true adept in it may justly be styled the high-priest of nature. But it is not nature alone that he studies; all arts are investigated by his comprehensive genius. He must be well acquainted with optics, hydrostatics, mechanics, geometry, trigonometry, &c.; and since it has been thought necessary to embellish rural scenes with all the varieties of architecture, from single pillar and obelisks, to bridges, ruins, pavilions, and even castles and churches, it is not enough for our professor to be as knowing as Solomon in all the species of vegetables, from the cedar of Lebanon to the hyssop on the wall; he must also rival that monarch in building, as well as his other talents. A knowledge of optics enables him to turn every *deceptio visus* to advantage. Hydrostatics are most immediately necessary, since it is decreed that every place must have a piece of water; and as every piece of water must have a boat of a particular contrivance, mechanics come in to his assistance; and he is carried over the glassy surface by snakes, birds, dolphins, dragons, or whatever else he pleases. The application of trigonometry is obvious; and if your gardens continue to increase in extent, in the same proportion

that they have done lately, geometry will be soon called in, to measure a degree of the earth upon the great lawn. But such extension of property cannot be acquired without a turn for the law, and a knowledge of all the variety of tenures, forfeitures, ejectments, and writs of *ad quod damnum*. Statuary and painting are sister arts; but our general lover has possessed them both, in spite of their consanguinity. And as for poetry, though he knows her to be the greatest jilt in the universe, he has made an attempt upon her under every tree that has a broad stem and a smooth bark. A knowledge of Latin is needful to judge of the effect of an inscription; and Greek, Phœnician, Tuscan, and Persic, are ornaments to a ruin.

Happy is the man of fortune who has such a director to influence and guide his taste, as the demon of Socrates is said to have continually accompanied that philosopher to regulate his morals. Milton very humorously describes a man, who without having the inward call, was desirous of being thought as religious as the rest of his neighbours of those times. ‘This man,’ says he, ‘finds himself out some factor, to whose care and credit he may commit the whole managing of his religious affairs; some divine of note and estimation; and makes the person of that man his religion. He entertains him, lodges him: his religion comes home at night, prays, is liberally supped, and sumptuously laid asleep: rises, is saluted, and after being well-breakfasted, his religion walks abroad, and leaves his kind entertainer in the shop, trading all day without his religion.’ Just in this manner does the mere man of fashion in these times think it necessary to have a taste; but though he does not commonly carry his taste about him, he is seldom so imprudent as to take any steps in his garden without his taste.

In an age so liberal of new names, it seems extraordinary that these universal connoisseurs have as yet obtained no title of honour, or distinction. This may help me to crown their panegyric with a word on their modesty; for to that alone must we attribute their having so long been without one; especially as they might as easily have immortalized their own names, as any of the ancient sages, who called their profession after themselves, the Pythagorean, Platonic, or Epicurean philosophy. Nor have they shown less modesty in their expectation of returns for their inestimable service, as will appear upon a comparison of their rewards with those of the ancient artists.

Mandrocles, who built the famous bridge over the Bosphorus, at the command of Darius, was rewarded by that monarch with a crown, and ten times the cost of that expensive undertaking. Whereas a tenth of the expense is reckoned a modern job; and no artist in our memory has aspired to any higher honour than that of knighthood. The next great work we read of was the canal of mount Athos; for which it was impossible that the director should receive any other than an honorary reward, because he died as soon as it was finished. His name was Artachæus; he was in stature the tallest of all the Persians, and his voice stronger than that of any other man; two very useful accomplishments in an overseer and director of multitudes. Xerxes, truly sensible of his merit, buried him with great pomp and magnificence, employed his whole army in erecting a sumptuous monument to his memory, and by direction of an oracle, honoured him as a hero with sacrifices and invocations.

How different from this was the treatment of our countryman, Captain Perry! A genius whose re-

membrance must make this nation both proud and ashamed. His performances are sufficient to give credit to the works above-mentioned, which before appeared fabulous. But what was his reward for projecting the junction of the Don and the Volga? For creating an artificial tide, and floating or laying dry the largest vessels in a few hours? But rather let me ask, what was his reward for that national work at home, the stopping Daggenham breach? I am sorry to answer, that he was persecuted and suffered to starve, for the debts he had contracted in accomplishing an undertaking so essential to the commerce of this kingdom, and the existence of its metropolis.

I hope our men of fortune will make more generous returns to those who administer so essentially to their pleasures; and I would have them distinguish between those dull mechanical rogues, whose thoughts never wander beyond the sphere of gain, and the generous spirit who is warmed by the profession, and who thinks himself paid by the exquisite scenery which his raptured imagination has produced. And when the baleful cypress shall alone of all his various plantations accompany him to the grave, let his munificent patron, in the most conspicuous part of his gardens, erect a temple to his memory, and inscribe it with propriety and truth, *Genio Loci*.

No. 120. THURSDAY, APRIL 17, 1755.

MOST people complain of fortune; few of nature: and the kinder they may think the latter has been

to them, the more they murmur at what they call the injustice of the former.

Why have not I the riches, the rank, the power of such and such? is the common expostulation with fortune: but Why have not I the merit, the talents, the wit, or the beauty of such and such others? is a reproach rarely or never made to nature.

The truth is, that nature, seldom profuse, and seldom niggardly, has distributed her gifts more equally than she is generally supposed to have done. Education and situation make the great difference. Culture improves, and occasions elicit natural talents. I make no doubt but that there are potentially (if I may use that pedantic word) many Bacons, Lockes, Newtons, Cæsars, Cromwells, and Marlboroughs, at the plough-tail, behind counters, and perhaps even among the nobility; but the soil must be cultivated, and the seasons favourable, for the fruit to have all its spirit and flavour.

If sometimes our common parent has been a little partial, and not kept the scales quite even; if one preponderates too much, we throw into the lighter a due counterpoise of vanity, which never fails to set all right. Hence it happens that hardly any one man would, without reserve, and in every particular, change with any other.

Though all are thus satisfied with the dispensations of nature, how few listen to her voice! How few follow her as a guide! In vain she points out to us the plain and direct way to truth; vanity, fancy, affectation, and fashion assume her shape, and wind us through fairy-ground to folly and error.

These deviations from nature are often attended by serious consequences, and always by ridiculous ones: for there is nothing truer than the trite ob-

ervation, 'that people are never ridiculous for being what they really are, but for affecting what they really are not.' Affectation is the only source, and, at the same time, the only justifiable object of ridicule. No man whatsoever, be his pretensions what they will, has a natural right to be ridiculous; it is an acquired right, and not to be acquired without some industry: which perhaps is the reason why so many people are so jealous and tenacious of it.

Even some people's vices are not their own, but affected and adopted (though at the same time unenjoyed), in hopes of shining in those fashionable societies, where the reputation of certain vices gives lustre. In these cases, the execution is commonly as awkward as the design is absurd; and the ridicule equals the guilt.

This calls to my mind a thing that really happened not many years ago. A young fellow of some rank and fortune, just let loose from the university, resolved, in order to make a figure in the world, to assume the shining character of, what he called, a rake. By way of learning the rudiments of his intended profession, he frequented the theatres, where he was often drunk, and always noisy. Being one night at the representation of that most absurd play, the *Libertine destroyed*, he was so charmed with the profligacy of the hero of the piece, that, to the edification of the audience, he swore many oaths that he would be the *Libertine destroyed*. A discreet friend of his, who sat by him, kindly represented to him, that to be the *Libertine* was a laudable design, which he greatly approved of; but that to be the *Libertine destroyed* seemed to him an unnecessary part of his plan, and rather rash. He persisted, however, in his first resolution, and insisted upon being the *Libertine*, and *destroyed*.

Probably he was so: at least the presumption is in his favour. There are, I am persuaded, so many cases of this nature, that for my own part I would desire no greater step towards the reformation of manners for the next twenty years, than that people should have no vices but *their own*.

The blockhead who affects wisdom because nature has given him dulness, becomes ridiculous only by his adopted character; whereas he might have stagnated unobserved in his native mud, or perhaps have engrossed deeds, collected shells, and studied heraldry with some success.

The shining coxcomb aims at all and decides finally upon every thing, because nature has given him pertness. The degree of parts and animal spirits necessary to constitute that character, if properly applied, might have made him useful in many parts of life; but his affectation and presumption make him useless in most, and ridiculous in all.

The septuagenary fine gentleman might probably, from his long experience and knowledge of the world, be esteemed and respected in the several relations of domestic life, which at his age nature points out to him; but he will most ridiculously spin out the rotten thread of his former gallantries. He dresses, languishes, ogles, as he did at five-and-twenty; and modestly intimates that he is not without a *bonne fortune*; which *bonne fortune* at last appears to be the prostitute he had long kept (not to himself), whom he marries and owns, because *the poor girl was so fond of him, and so desirous to be made an honest woman*.

The sexagenary widow remembers that she was handsome, but forgets that it was thirty years ago, and thinks herself so, or at least very *likeable*, still. The pardonable affectations of her youth and beauty

unpardonably continue, increase even with her years, and are doubly exerted, in hopes of concealing the number. All the gaudy glittering parts of dress, which rather degraded than adorned her beauty in its bloom, now expose to the highest and justest ridicule her shrivelled or her overgrown carcass. She totters or sweats under the load of her jewels, embroideries and brocades, which, like so many Egyptian hieroglyphics, serve only to authenticate the venerable antiquity of her august mummy. Her eyes dimly twinkle tenderness, or leer desire: their language, however inelegant, is intelligible; and the half-pay captain understands it. He addresses his vows to her vanity, which assures her they are sincere. She pities him, and prefers him to credit, decency, and every social duty. He tenderly prefers her (though not without some hesitation) to a gaol.

Self-love, kept within due bounds, is a natural and useful sentiment. It is, in truth, social love too, as Mr. Pope has very justly observed: it is the spring of many good actions, and of no ridiculous ones. But self-flattery is only the ape or caricatura of self-love, and resembles it no more than is absolutely necessary to heighten the ridicule. Like other flattery, it is the most profusely bestowed and greedily swallowed, where it is the least deserved. I will conclude this subject with the substance of a fable of the ingenious Monsieur de la Motte, which seems not unapplicable to it.

Jupiter made a lottery in heaven, in which mortals, as well as gods, were allowed to have tickets. The prize was wisdom; and Minerva got it. The mortals murmured, and accused the gods of foul play. Jupiter, to wipe off this aspersion, declared another lottery, for mortals singly and exclusively of the gods. The prize was folly. They got it, and shared it among themselves. All were satisfied. The loss of

wisdom was neither regretted nor remembered; folly supplied its place, and those who had the largest share of it thought themselves the wisest.

No. 121. THURSDAY, APRIL 24, 1755.

Post mediam noctem—cum somnia vera. HOR.

MR. FITZ-ADAM,

AMONG the many visions related by your predecessors and contemporaries, the writers of periodical essays, I remember few but what have been in the oriental style and character. For my own part, I am neither Dervise nor Brachman, but a poet and true Christian, though given now and then to be a little heathenish in my expressions: and as I apprehend that no one set of people will claim the sole property and privilege of dreaming to themselves, since I am apt to nod as well as my betters, I beg that the following dream may find a place in your paper.

I imagined myself to be walking on a road: it was wide and well beaten. An elderly gentleman, with whom I joined company, informed me it was the road to Parnassus, and very obligingly offered me his services. The first groupe of figures which attracted my attention were pale and thin with study. They were shaking ivory letters in a hat, and then throwing them on the ground. I supposed that they were performing some mystery of the Cabala; but on my nearer approach, learnt that they were the editors and commentators of the ancient poets; and that this was only a scheme of assisting conjecture.

Being now startled with a great noise, I turned suddenly about, and perceived just behind me a set of

Lyric poets, with one or two Dithyrambics. Their conversation was so little connected, and their motions so irregular, that I concluded them to be drunk; and apprehensive of mischief in so furious a company, quickened my pace.

The road now winded through the most beautiful fields, whose very bushes were all in bloom, and intermingled with shrubs, that afforded the most agreeable scents. The wild notes of the birds, joining with the tinkling of numerous rills that gushed from natural or artificial rocks, or with a deeper echo of some larger flood that fell at a distance, made a concert that charmed me. A party were here entertaining themselves with the gaiety of the situation: they had stepped out of the road to gather flowers; and were so delighted with wandering about the meadows, that they seemed entirely to have forgot their journey. They appeared to have been educated in Italy; their hair was curled and powdered, their linen laced, and their habits so covered with fringe and embroidery, that it was almost impossible to discover any cloth. I was so much in raptures with their company, and with the beauties of this romantic scene, that I would have stopped there myself, and proceeded no farther; but my guide hinted to me that the place was enchanted, and pressed me to go forwards.

I could not help laughing to see next a great crowd of Bombasties: a set of fat, pursy fellows, so asthmatic, that they could hardly move, and yet were eternally straining and attempting to run races; as were several dwarfs in enormous jack-boots, to overtake two horsemen (who rode very swift at a distance, and were said to be Milton and Shakspeare), but tumbled at every four or five steps, to the great diversion of the spectators.

A troop of modern Latin poets had halted; and

having lost their way, were inquiring it of a man, who carried a phrase-book and a Gradus ad Parnassum in his hand; and seemed always to be in a terrible uncertainty, when the authority of their guide either failed or deceived them.

They were followed by some very genteel shepherds, who wore red stockings and large shoulder-knots, fluttering to the breath of the zephyrs. Crooks, glittering with tinsel, were in their hands, and embroidered pouches dangling at their sides. They talked much about their flocks and Amaryllis; but I saw neither the one nor the other; and was surprised, as some of them pretended to music, to hear an air of the Italian opera played upon the bagpipe. The gentleness of their aspects served to render more formidable, by the contrast, the countenances of a company that now overtook me. It was a legion of critics. They were very liberal of their censures upon every one that passed, especially if he made a tolerable figure. *Diction*, *harmony*, and *taste* were the general terms, which they threw out with great vehemence. They frowned on me as I passed: my looks discovered my fear; the alarm was given; and at the very first sound of their catcalls, terrified to the last degree, I pulled my guide by the coat, and took to my heels.

We at last arrived at the foot of the mountain. There was an inconceivable crowd, who, not being admitted at the entrance, were endeavouring to crawl up the sides: but as the precipice was very steep, they continually tumbled back again. There was but one way of access, which was so extremely narrow, that it was almost impossible for two persons to go abreast, without one justling against the other. The gates were opened and shut by three amiable virgins, Genius, Good Sense, and Good Edu-

cation. They examined all that passed. Some few, however, pushed forward by a vast crowd of friends, forced their way in; but had generally the mortification of being brought back again, and turned out by the centinels.

By the interest of my guide, we were permitted to visit what part of Parnassus we pleased; and having mounted the hill, we entered a large garden, and were soon lost in the paths of a very intricate grove. It was in some places so exceedingly dark, that we had great difficulty to find our way out. This Labyrinth of Allegory, as it was called, was held by the ancients in a kind of superstitious reverence. The gloom of it was often so great, that we were ready to tumble at every step; but wherever the shade was softened by a twilight sufficient for us just to discover our way, there was something very delightful, as well as venerable, in the scene.

In other parts of the garden we saw beds of the most beautiful flowers, and a great number of bay-trees; but not a single fruit-tree. Among the shrubs, in many rivulets of different breadth and depth, ran the Heliconian stream. The lesser rills, on account of the vast multitude of people continually dabbling in them, were very muddy; but the fountain-head, though extremely deep, was as clear as crystal. The water had sometimes this peculiar quality, that whoever looked into it saw his own face reflected with great beauty, though never so deformed; inso-much that several were known to pine away there, in a violent affection for their own persons. At the end of the garden were several courts of judicature, where causes were then hearing. The lesser court, which was that of criticism, was prodigiously crowded: for (as we observed afterwards) all those who had lost their causes as poets defendant in the principal

court turned in hither, and became plaintiffs in their turn, on pretence of little trespasses. In the principal court many actions were brought on the statute of maiming, chiefly by the ancients, and some celebrated moderns, against their editors and amenders, and for torts and wrongs against their interpreters and commentators. Not a few indictments were brought for petty larceny, and those chiefly by the Roman poets against the modern Latin ones.

Not far from these was the stable, or *ecurie* of his poetic majesty. I was greatly surprised to see more than one Pegasus. The grooms were just then going to water them, which gave me an opportunity of taking more particular notice.

The first was the Epic Pegasus. It was a very fine large horse, had been taught the *manege*, and moved with great stateliness. The Pindaric was the only one who had wings: his motions were irregular, sudden, and unequal. The Elegiac was a gelding, exceedingly delicate in its shape, and much gentler than any of the rest, particularly than another steed, which foamed and pulled with such violence, that it was with great difficulty the rider held him in. As I attempted to stroke him, he clapped his ears back, and struck out his heels with great vehemence, and made me cautious of putting myself in the way of the Satiric Pegasus for the future. The Epigrammatic was a little pert pony, which every six or seven paces kicked up, and very much resembled the former, size only excepted. Besides these, there were several others, which did not properly belong to Apollo's stud, and which were employed in many useful, but laborious offices, as subservient to the rest.

It was impossible to pass by the stables without making some inquiry after the original Pegasus, so much celebrated, and the sire from whom all the

last-mentioned drew their pedigree. A sour-looking fellow of a critic, whose province it was to curry him, informed me with great expressions of sorrow, 'that the old horse was really quite worn out; having been rode through all sorts of roads, on all sorts of errands: for that there was scarce a pedant living or dead, or even a boy who had been five years at school, but had been upon him, either with leave or without: that he had long ago lost his shoes, broke his knees, and slipped his shoulder; and that therefore Apollo, in pity to the poor beast, and to prevent such barbarity for the future, had ordered an edict to be fixed on the door of the stable, that no person or persons within his realms should for the future ride or drive him, without first producing his proper licence and qualification.'

At length we arrived at the highest part of the mountain, where the temple was situated. It was a large building of marble, of one colour, and built all in the same order. The statues and bas-reliefs which adorned it represented some well-known part of poetic history. The whole appeared at once solid and elegant, without that profusion of decorations which fixes the eye to parts. The inside of the hall was painted with several subjects taken out of the *Iliad*, the *Æneid*, and *Paradise Lost*. Those of the *Iliad* had the passions and manners strongly characterized, with great simplicity of colouring, by the hand of Raphael. The beautiful tints and softness of the Venetian school corresponded with the genius of Virgil. The *Paradise Lost*, as partaking of the fine colouring of the one, and of the force of the other, with something more expressive in the language and images, greatly resembled the style of Rubens; while some of its more horrid scenes of embattled or tortured demons recalled to my mind

the wild imagination and fierce spirit of a Michael Angelo.

At the upper end of the hall Apollo was seated on a most magnificent throne of folios richly gilt, and was surrounded by a great number of poets both ancient and modern. Before him flamed an altar, which a priestess of a very sleepy countenance continually supplied with the fuel of such productions, as are the daily sacrifice which Dulness is constantly offering to the president of literature.

Being now at leisure to consider the place more attentively, I saw inscribed on several pillars names of great repute in both the past and present age. Some indeed of the latter, though but lately engraven, were nearly worn out; while others of an elder date increased in clearness the longer they stood; and by being more attentively viewed, augmented their force, as the former became fainter. A particular part of the temple was assigned for the inscriptions of those persons, who adding to their exalted rank in life a merit which might have distinguished them without the advantages of birth, claim a double right to have their names preserved to futurity, among the monuments of so august an edifice.

At the view of so many objects, capable of inspiring the most insensible with emulation, I found myself touched with an ambition which little became me, and could not help inquiring what method I should pursue to attain such an honour. But while I was deeply meditating upon the project, and vain enough to hope sharing to myself some little obscure corner in the temple, a sudden noise awaked me, and I found every thing to have been merely the effect of my imagination.

No. 122. THURSDAY, MAY 1, 1755.

TO MR. FITZ-ADAM.

Black Boy Alley, April 28.

SIR,

I AM one of that numerous tribe of men who (as you lately observed) live the Lord knows how. I have not the honour to be known to you even in person, for I seldom go abroad: but you seem, by your writings, to be of a compassionate turn; and therefore I take the liberty to put myself under your protection.

I am the son of an honest tradesman in Cheapside, and was born in a house that has descended in the family, from father to son, through several generations. I had my education at a grammar-school in London, not far from the street where my father lived, and where he used frequently to call as he passed by, to remind my master that he hoped I should soon *go into Greek*. I verily believe the good man persuaded himself, that whenever this happened it would give him a figure in the eyes of the evening club.

When I was about sixteen years old, my father observed to me one day, as I was sitting with him in the little back shop, that it was now high time for me to determine what scheme of life to pursue; and though I knew that my grandfather, a little before his death, had expressed his desire of having me settled in the old trade, where he said I should be sure of good will, yet I answered my father, without hesitation, that since he gave me leave to choose for myself, I was inclined to study physic. My father,

who was in raptures at hearing me make choice of a learned profession, went that very day, and talked over the matter with an old friend of his at Gresham-College; and the result of their conference was, that I should be sent to study under the celebrated Doctor Herman Boerhaave. I was equipped very decently upon the occasion, and in a very few days arrived safely at Leyden, where I spent my time in reading the best books on the subject, and in a constant attendance on my master's lectures, who expressed himself so pleased with my indefatigable application, as to tell me at parting, that I should be an honour to the profession. But I am sorry to tell you, Mr. Fitz-Adam, that notwithstanding this great man's remarkable sagacity, he knew nothing of destiny; for since my return to England, I have lived seven years in London, undistinguished in a narrow court, without any opportunity of doing either good or hurt in my calling. And what most mortifies me is to see two or three of my fellow-students, who were esteemed very dull fellows at the doctor's, lolling at their ease in warm chariots upon springs, while I am doomed to walk humbly through the dirt, in a thread-bare coat and darned stockings, a decayed tie-periwig, a brass-hilted sword by my side, and a hat entirely void of shape and colour under my arm; which I assure you I do not carry there for ornament, nor for fear of damaging my wig, but to point out to those who pass by that I am a physician. You may wonder, perhaps, at hearing nothing of my father; but alas! the good man had the misfortune to die insolvent soon after my return, and I had no friend to apply to for assistance.

One day, as I walked through a narrow passage near St. Martin's-lane, I saw a crowd of people gathered together, and, in the midst of them, a large fat woman upon the ground, in a fit. I soon brought

her to herself; and as I was conducting her home, she kindly asked me to dine with her. I found, upon entering her door, that she kept a chop-house; and, as I was going away after a hearty meal, she gave me a general invitation, in return for the good office I had done her, to step in and taste her mutton, whenever I came that way. I was by no means backward to accept the offer, and took frequent opportunities of visiting my patient. But alas! those days of plenty were soon over; for it happened unfortunately, not long after, that her favourite daughter died under my care, at a time when I assured the mother that she was quite out of danger. The manner in which she accosted me upon this occasion made it clear that I must once more return to a course of fasting.

As I was musing one morning, in a most disconsolate mood, with my leg in my landlady's lap, while she darned one of my stockings, it came into my head to collect from various books, together with my own experience and observations, plain and wholesome rules on the subject of *diet*; and then publish them in a neat pocket volume: for I was always well inclined to do good to the world, however ungratefully it used me. I doubt, Mr. Fitz-Adam, you will hardly forbear smiling to hear a man, who was almost starved, talk gravely of compiling observations on *diet*. The moment I had finished my volume I ran with it to an eminent bookseller, near the Mansion-house: he was just set down to dinner; but upon hearing that there was a gentleman in the shop, with a large bundle of papers in his coat-pocket, he courteously invited me into the parlour, and desired me *to do as he did*. As soon as the cloth was taken away, I produced my manuscript, and the bookseller put on his spectacles; but to my

no small mortification, after glancing his eye over the title-page, he looked steadfastly upon me for near a minute, in a kind of amazement which I could not account for, and then broke out in the following manner:—‘My dear sir! you are come to the very worst place in the world for the sale of such a performance as this. Why, you might as soon expect the court of aldermen’s permission to dedicate to them the life of Lewis Cornaro, as to think of preaching upon the subject of *lean and sallow abstinence* between the Royal Exchange and Temple-bar.’ He added, indeed, in a milder tone, that he was acquainted with an honest man of the trade, who lived near Soho, and who would probably venture to print for me upon reasonable terms; and that if I pleased he would recommend me to him by a letter; which (through the violent agitation of my spirits) I refused.

I walked back to my lodging with a very heavy heart; and with the most gloomy prospect before my eyes, put my favourite work into a bat-box, which stands upon the head of my bed, and there it has remained ever since.

Now the favour I have to beg of you, worthy sir, is to recommend to the world, in one of your papers, such proposals as I will bring to you next Sunday morning, or any dark evening this week, for publishing by subscription the result of my laborious inquiries, that I may be able to procure a decent maintenance. If I should fail in this attempt, my affairs are at so low an ebb, that I must submit, for the safety of my person, to the confinement of the Fleet, or pass the rest of my days, perhaps, under the same roof with the unfortunate Theodore, whose *kingdom* (I doubt) *is not of this world*.

In the mean time, you will oblige me by publish-

ing this account, that others may take warning by my sad example; that the idle vanity of fathers, when they read this story, may be restrained within proper bounds; and young men not venture to engage in a learned profession without the assistance of a private fortune, or the interest of great friends. Believe me, Mr. Fitz-Adam, it is much more to the purpose of a physician to have the countenance of a man or woman of quality than the sagacity even of a Boerhaave; for let him have what share of learning he pleases, if he has nothing better to recommend him to public favour, he must be content to hunger and thirst in a garret up four pair of stairs.

I am, Sir,
(with all possible respect)
the unfortunate
T. M.

No. 123. THURSDAY, MAY 8, 1755.

————— *Dapibus, supremi*
Grata testudo Jovis. ————— HOR.

IF there be truth in the common maxim, ‘That he deserves best of his country who can make two blades of grass grow where only one grew before,’ how truly commendable must it be (since it is so great a merit to provide for the beasts of the field) to add to the sustenance of man! and what praises are due to the inventor of a new dish! By a new dish, I do not mean the confounding, hashing, and

disguising of an old one ; I cannot give that name to the French method of transposing the bodies of animals ; serving up flesh in skins of fish, or the essence of either in a jelly ; nor yet to the English way of macerating substances, and reducing all things to one uniform consistency and taste, which a good housewife calls potting: for I am of opinion, that Louis the fourteenth would not have given the reward he promised for the invention of a sixth order of architecture to the man who should have jumbled together the other five.

My meaning is, that as through neglect or caprice we have lost some eatables which our ancestors held in high esteem, as the heron, the bittern, the crane, and, I may add, the swan, it should seem requisite, in the ordinary revolution of things, to replace what has been laid aside, by the introduction of some eatable which was not known to our predecessors. But though invention may claim the first praise, great honour is due to the restorer of lost arts ; wherefore, if the earth does not really furnish a sufficient variety of untasted animals, I could wish that gentlemen of leisure and easy fortunes would apply themselves to recover the secret of fattening and preparing for the table such creatures, as from disuse we do not at present know how to treat : and I should think it would be a noble employment for the lovers of antiquity to study to restore those infallible sources of luxury, the salt-water stews of the Romans.

Of all the improvements in the modern kitchen, there are none can bear a comparison with the introduction of turtle. We are indebted for this delicacy, as well as for several others, to the generous spirit and benevolent zeal of the West Indians. The profusion of luxury with which the Creolian in England covers his board is intended only as a foil to

the more exquisite dainties of America. His pride is, to triumph in your neglect of the former, while he labours to serve you from the vast shell, which smokes under his face, and occasions him a toil almost as intolerable as that of his slaves in his plantations. But he would die in the service rather than see his guests, for want of a regular supply, eat a morsel of any food which had not crossed the Atlantic ocean.

Though it was never my fortune to be regaled with the true Creolian politeness, and though I cannot compliment my countrymen on their endeavours to imitate it, I shall here give my readers a most faithful account of the only turtle feast I ever had the honour to be present at.

Towards the latter end of last summer, I called upon a friend in the city, who, though no West Indian, is a great importer of turtle for his own eating. Upon my entrance at the great gates, my eyes were caught with the shells of that animal, which were disposed in great order along the walls; and I stopt so long in astonishment at their size and number, that I did not perceive my friend's approach, who had traversed the court to receive me. However, I could find he was not displeased to see my attention so deeply engaged upon the trophies of his luxury. 'Come,' says he, 'if you love turtle, I'll show you a sight;' and bidding me follow him, he opened a door, and discovered six turtles swimming about in a vast cistern, round which there hung twelve large legs of mutton, which he told me were just two days provision for the turtles; for that each of them consumed a leg of mutton every day. He then carried me into the house, and showing me some blankets of a particular sort, 'These,' says he, 'are what the turtle lie in o' nights: they are particularly adapted to this use: I have established a manufacture of them

in the West Indies. But since you are curious in these matters,' continued he, 'I'll show you some more of my inventions.' Immediately he unlocked a drawer, and produced as many fine saws, chisels, and instruments of different contrivances, as would have made a figure in the-apparatus of an anatomist. One was destined to start a rib; another to scrape the callipash; the third to disjoint the vertebræ of the back bone; with many others, for purposes which I could not remember. The next scene of wonder was the kitchen, in which was an oven, that had been rebuilt with a mouth of a most uncommon capacity, on purpose for the reception of an enormous turtle, which was to be drest that very day, and which my friend insisted I should stay to partake of. I would gladly have been excused; but he would not be denied: proposing a particular pleasure in entertaining a new beginner, and assuring me, that if I should not happen to like it, I need not fear the finding something to make out a dinner; for that his wife, though she knew it would give him the greatest pleasure in the world, could never be prevailed on to taste a single morsel of turtle. He then carried me to the fish, which was to be the feast of the day, and bid me observe, that though it had been cut in two full twenty hours, it was still alive. This was indeed a melancholy truth: for I could plainly observe a tremulous motion almost continually agitating it, with, now and then, more distinguishable throbbings. While I was examining these faint indications of sensibility, a jolly negro wench, observing me, came up with a handful of salt, which she sprinkled all over the creature. This instantly produced such violent convulsions, that I was no longer able to look upon a scene of so much horror, and ran shuddering out of the kitchen. My friend en-

deavoured to satisfy me, by saying that the head and heart had been cut in pieces twenty hours before ; and that the whole was that instant to be plunged in boiling water : but it required some reflection, and more, or perhaps less philosophy than I am master of, to reconcile such appearances to human feelings. I endeavoured to turn the discourse, by asking what news ? He answered, ‘ There is a fleet arrived from the West Indies.’ He then shook his head, and looked serious ; and after a suspense, which gave room for melancholy apprehensions, lamented that they had been very unfortunate the last voyage, and lost the greatest part of their cargo of turtles. He proceeded to inform me of the various methods which had been tried for bringing over this animal in a healthy state ; for that the common way had been found to waste the fat, which was the most estimable part ; and he spoke with great concern of the miscarriage of a vessel, framed like a well-boat, which had dashed them against each other, and killed them. He then entered upon an explanation of a project of his own, which being out of my way, and much above my comprehension, took up the greatest part of the morning. Upon hearing the clock strike, he rung his bell, and asked if his turtle-clothes were aired. While I was meditating on this new term, and, I confess, unable to divine what it could mean, the servant brought in a coat and waistcoat, which my friend slipped on, and folding them round his body like a night-gown, declared, that though they then hung so loose about him, by that time *he had spoke with the turtle*, he should stretch them as tight as a drum.

Upon the first rap at the door there entered a whole shoal of guests : for the turtle-eater is a gregarious, I had almost said, a sociable animal ; and I thought it remarkable, that in so large a number,

there should not be one who was a whole minute later than the time: nay, the very cook was punctual; and the lady of the house appeared, on this extraordinary day, the moment the dinner was served upon the table. Upon her first entrance, she ordered the shell to be removed from the upper end of the table, declaring she could not bear the smell or sight of it so near her. It was immediately changed for a couple of boiled chickens, to the great regret of all who sat in her neighbourhood, who followed it with their eyes, inwardly lamenting that they should never taste one of the good bits. In vain did they send their plates and solicit their share; the plunderers, who were now in possession of both the shells, were sensible to no call but that of their own appetites, and till they had satisfied them, there was not one that would listen to any thing else. The eagerness, however, and despatch of their rapacity having soon shrunk the choice pieces, they vouchsafed to help their friends to the coarser parts, as thereby they cleared their way for the search after other delicacies; boasting aloud all the while, that they had not sent one good bit to the other end of the table.

When the meat was all made away with, and nothing remained but what adhered to the shell, our landlord, who during the whole time had taken care of nobody but himself, began to exercise his various instruments; and amidst his efforts to procure himself more, broke out in praise of the superior flavour of the spinal marrow, which he was then helping himself to, and for the goodness of which the company had his word.

The guests having now drank up all the gravy, and scraped the shells quite clean, the cloth was taken away, and the wine brought upon the table. But this change produced nothing new in the con-

versation. No hunters were ever more loud in the posthumous fame of the hero of their sport than our epicures in memory of the turtle. To give some little variety to the discourse, I asked if they had never tried any other creature which might possibly resemble this excellent food; and proposed the experiment of an alligator, whose scales seemed to be intended by nature for the production of green fat. I was stopt short in my reasoning by a gentleman, who told me, that upon trial of the alligator, there had been found so strong a perfume in his flesh, that the stomach nauseated, and could not bear it; and that this was owing to a ball of musk, which is always discovered in the head of that animal. I had however the satisfaction to perceive that my question did me no discredit with the company; and before it broke up, I had no less than twelve invitations to turtle for the ensuing summer. Besides the honour herein designed me, I consider these invitations as having more real value than so many shares in any of the bubbles of the famous South-sea year; and I make no doubt but that, by the time they become due, they will be remarkable in Change-alley. For as the gentlemen at White's have borrowed from thence the method of transferring the surplus dinners which they win at play, it is probable they will, in their turn, furnish a hint to the alley, where it will soon be as common to transfer shares in turtle as in any other kind of stock.

No. 124. THURSDAY, MAY 15, 1755.

My correspondent of to-day will, I hope, forgive me for so long delaying the publication of his letter. All I can say to this gentleman, and to those

whose letters have lain by me almost an equal length of time, is, that no partiality to any performance of my own has occasioned any such delay.

TO MR. FITZ-ADAM.

SIR,

My highest ambition is, to appear in the cause of the fair sex: nor would any thing flatter my vanity so much as the honour of standing, in this degenerate age, the single champion of those, whom all mankind are bound to defend. No time seems more proper for this kind of gallantry than the present; now, when the graver sort of men are continually throwing out sarcastic hints, at least, if not open invectives, against their lovely country-women; and the younger and more sprightly are, from I know not what cause, less forward than ever in their defence. Though my abilities are by no means equal to my inclinations for their services, give me leave to offer to you, and your polite readers, a few thoughts on this interesting subject.

The malice of wits has, from time immemorial, attacked these injured beauties with the charge of levity and inconstancy; a charge, applicable indeed to the frailty of human nature in general, but by no means to be admitted to the particular prejudice of the most amiable part of the species. History and experience inform us, that every different country produces a different race of people: the disposition of the inhabitants, as well as the complexion, receives a colour from the clime in which they are born. Yet the same sentiments do not always spring from the same soil. Some strong particularity of genius distinguishes every æra of a nation. From hence arises what, in the language of the polite world, we call fashion; as variable with regard to principles as

dress. It would be, in these days, as uncommon and ridiculous to profess the maxims of an old Englishman, as to strut about in a short cloak and trunk hose. The same vicissitude of character takes place among the ladies; their conduct, however, has been still consistent and irreproachable; for they have always acted up to the dictates of fashion.

The matrons of ancient Rome, though as remarkable for public spirit as those of Great Britain, were by no means so fond of public diversions. It appears from a hint which Horace has left us, that they were with difficulty prevailed on even to dance upon holidays. In this, we may observe, they widely differed from those Sabine dames, from whom they derived their boasted extraction: for so strongly did they think themselves bound by the restrictions of fashion, that they refused to imitate their illustrious ancestors, in that very circumstance, to which their empire owed its original.

We need not look back so far into antiquity for instances of this kind; our own times may better supply us. Cruelty, if we may believe the lovers of the last century, was the reigning passion of those tyrants, to whom they devoted their hearts, their labours, and their understandings. No man, I presume, will cast such an imputation on the present race of beauties: their influence is more benign, their glory is of a more exalted nature: mercy is their characteristic. It would be a piece of impudence to assert, that they do not in every respect excel their relentless great grandmothers. Beauty, Mr. Fitz-Adam, is the peculiar perfection of our fair contemporaries. To what then, but the amiable compassion of these gentle creatures, can be ascribed a kind of miracle, a seeming change in the constitution of nature? Till poetry and romance are forgotten, the miseries of love will be remembered. Authors of

the highest reputation have not scrupled to assure us, that the lovers of their days did very frequently forget to eat and drink; nay, that they sometimes proceeded so far as to hang or drown themselves, for the sake of the cruel nymphs they adored. Whence comes it then, that in an age, to which suicide is not unknown, no instances are to be met with of this disinterested conduct? In the space of many years, I do not remember above one, and that one occasioned by the lady's tenderness, not of heart, but of conscience. Matter of fact, therefore, proves the truth of my assertion; our goddesses have laid aside the bloody disposition of pagan idols; insomuch that scarce any man living has seen a lover's bier covered with cypress, or, indeed, with so much as a willow garland.

It were ingratitude not to acknowledge to whom we are indebted for so great a blessing. The celebrated inventors of modern romance, together with the judicious writers of the stage, have the honour of being the deliverers of their countrymen. So ardently have they pleaded the public cause, that the ladies are at last content to throw up the reins, to accept unmeaning flattery, instead of tender sighs, and admit innocent freedom, in the place of distant adoration. They have learnt to indulge their admirers with frequent opportunities of gazing on their charms, and are grown too generous to conceal from them even the little failings of their tempers. Nor is this all: while the persuasive eloquence of these gentlemen has found the way to soften the rigour of the fair sex, they have animated the resolution of others; for by them are we instructed in the winning art of modest assurance, and furnished with the *dernier resort* of indifference.

You will not be surprised, sir, that I speak so warmly on this subject, when you are informed how great a share of the public felicity falls to my lot.

HAD the fashionable polity of this kingdom continued in the same situation in which it stood a hundred years ago, I had been, perhaps, the most unfortunate man in the world. No heart is more susceptible of tender impressions than mine, nor is my resolution strong enough to hold out against the slightest attacks of a pair of bright eyes. Love, weak as he is, has often made me his captive; but I can never be too lavish of my applause to those generous beauties, who have been the authors of my pains: so far have they ever been from glorying in their power, or insulting the miseries they occasioned, that they have constantly employed the most effectual methods to free me from their fetters. By their indulgence it is, that I have arrived at the fifty-third year of my life, without the incumbrance of a wife or legitimate children; that I can now look back with pleasure on the dangers I have escaped, and forward with comfort on the peace and quiet laid up for my old age. This, sir, is my case; gratitude prompts me to publish the obligations I owe; and I beg leave to take this opportunity of paying my debt of honour, and at the same time of subscribing myself,

Your constant reader, admirer,
And very humble servant.

No. 125. THURSDAY, MAY 22, 1755.

HAD the many wise philosophers of antiquity, who have so often and so justly compared the life of man to a race, lived in the present times, they would have

seen the propriety of that simile greatly augmented; for if we observe the behaviour of the polite part of this nation (that is, of *all* the nation) we shall see that their whole lives are one continued race; in which every one is endeavouring to distance all behind him, and to overtake, or pass by, all who are before him; every one is flying from his inferiors in pursuit of his superiors, who fly from him with equal alacrity.

Were not the consequences of this ridiculous pride of the most destructive nature to the public, the scene would be really entertaining. Every tradesman is a merchant, every merchant is a gentleman, and every gentleman one of the noblesse. We are a nation of gentry, *populus generosorum*: we have no such thing as common people among us: between vanity and gin, the species is utterly destroyed. The sons of our lowest mechanics, acquiring with the learning at charity-schools the laudable ambition of becoming gentle-folks, despise their paternal occupations, and are all soliciting for the honourable employments of tide-waiters and excisemen. Their girls are all milliners, mantua-makers, or lady's women; or presumptuously exercise that genteel profession, which used to be peculiarly reserved for the well-educated daughters of deceased clergymen. Attorneys' clerks and city prentices dress like cornets of dragoons, keep their mistresses and their hunters, criticise at the play, and toast at the tavern. The merchant leaves his counting-house for St. James's, and the country gentleman his own affairs for those of the public; by which neither of them receives much benefit. Every commoner of distinction is impatient for a peerage, and treads hard upon the heels of quality in dress, equipage, and expenses of every kind. The nobility, who can aim no higher, plunge

themselves into debt and dependence, to preserve their rank; and are even there quickly overtaken by their unmerciful pursuers.

The same foolish vanity, that thus prompts us to imitate our superiors, induces us also to be, or pretend to be, their inseparable companions; or, as the phrase is, to keep the *best company*; by which is always to be understood, such company as are much above us in rank or fortune, and consequently despise and avoid us, in the same manner as we ourselves do our inferiors. By this ridiculous affectation are all the pleasures of social life, and all the advantages of friendly converse, utterly destroyed. We choose not our companions for their wit and learning, their good humour or good sense, but for their power of conferring this imaginary dignity; as if greatness was communicable, like the powers of the loadstone, by friction, or by contact, like electricity. Every young gentleman is taught to believe it is more eligible, and more honourable, to destroy his time, his fortune, his morals, and his understanding at a gaming-house with the *best company*, than to improve them all in the conversation of the most ingenious and entertaining of his equals: and every self-conceited girl, in fashionable life, chooses rather to endure the affected silence and insolent head-ach of my lady duchess for a whole evening, than to pass it in mirth and jollity with the most amiable of her acquaintance. For since it is possible that some of my readers, who have not had the honour of being admitted into the *best company*, should imagine that among such there is ever the best conversation, the most lively wit, the most profound judgment, the most engaging affability and politeness; it may be proper to inform them, that this is by no means always the case; but that frequently in such company little is said, and less attended to; no disposition appears either to please

others, or to be pleased themselves: but that in the room of all the before-mentioned agreeable qualifications, cards are introduced, endued with the convenient power of reducing all men's understandings, as well as their fortunes, to an equality.

It is pleasant to observe how this race, converted into a kind of perpetual warfare, between the *good* and *bad company*, in this country, has subsisted for half a century last past; in which the former have been perpetually pursued by the latter, and fairly beaten out of all their resources for superior distinction; out of innumerable fashions in dress, and variety of diversions; every one of which they have been obliged to abandon, as soon as occupied by their impertinent rivals. In vain have they armed themselves with lace and embroidery, and intrenched themselves in hoops and furbelows: in vain have they had recourse to full-bottomed periwigs and toupees; to high-heads, and low-heads, and no heads at all: trade has bestowed riches on the competitors, and riches have procured them equal finery. Hair has curled as genteelly on one side of Temple-bar as on the other, and hoops have grown to as prodigious a magnitude in the foggy air of Cheapside as in the purer regions of Grosvenor-square and Hill-street.

With as little success have operas, oratorios, *ridottos*, and other expensive diversions, been invented to exclude *bad company*: tradesmen, by enhancing their prices, have found tickets for their wives and daughters, and by this means have been enabled to insult the *good company*, their customers, at their own expense; and, like true conquerors, have obliged the enemy to pay for their defeat. But this stratagem has in some measure been obviated by the prudence of the *very best company*, who, for this, and many other wise considerations, have usually declined paying them at all.

For many years was this combat between the *good* and *bad company* of this metropolis performed, like the ancient tilts and tournaments, before his majesty and the royal family, every Friday night in the drawing-room at St. James's; which now appears, as it usually fares with the seat of war, desolate and uninhabited, and totally deserted on both sides: except that on a twelfth-night the *bad company* never fail to assemble, to commemorate annually the victories they have there obtained.

The *good company* being thus every where put to flight, they thought proper at last to retire to their own citadels; that is, to form numerous and brilliant assemblies at their own hotels, in which they imagined that they could neither be imitated nor intruded on. But here again they were grievously mistaken; for no sooner was the signal given, but every little lodging-house in town, of two rooms and a closet on a floor, or rather of two closets and a cupboard, teemed with card-tables, and overflowed with company: and as making a crowd was the great point here principally aimed at, the smaller the houses, and the more indifferent the company, this point was the more easily effected. Nor could intrusion be better guarded against than imitation; for by some means or other, either by the force of beauty or of dress, of wealth or impudence, of folly enough to lose great sums at play, or of knavery enough to win them, or of some such eminent or extraordinary qualifications, their plebeian enemies soon broke through the strongest of their barriers, and mingled in the thickest of their ranks, to the utter destruction of all superiority and distinction.

But though it must be owned that the affairs of the *good company* are now in a very bad situation, yet I would not have them despair, nor perpetually carry about the marks of their defeat in their coun-

tenances, so visible in a mixture of *fiercé* and dejection. They have still one asylum left to fly to, which, with all their advantages of birth and education, it is surprising they should not long since have discovered; but since they have not, I shall beg leave to point it out; and it is this: that they once more retire to the long-deserted fruits of true British grandeur, their princely seats and magnificent castles in their several counties: and there, arming themselves with religion and virtue, hospitality and charity, civility and friendship, bid defiance to their impertinent pursuers. And though I will not undertake that they shall not, even here, be followed in time, and imitated by their inferiors, yet so averse are all ranks of people at present to this sort of retirement, so totally disused from the exercise of those kinds of arms, and so unwilling to return to it, that I will venture to promise, it will be very long before they can be overtaken or attacked; but that here, and here only, they may enjoy their favourite singularity unmolested, for half a century to come.

No. 126. THURSDAY, MAY 29, 1755.

I AM favoured by a correspondent with the following little instructive piece, which he calls

THE ART OF HAPPINESS.

A good temper is one of the principal ingredients of happiness. This, it may be said, is the work of nature, and must be born with us: and so in a good measure it is; yet sometimes it may be acquired by art, and always improved by culture. Almost every object that attracts our notice has its bright

and its dark side: he that habituates himself to look at the displeasing side, will sour his disposition, and consequently impair his happiness; while he who constantly beholds it on the bright side, insensibly meliorates his temper, and in consequence of it, improves his own happiness, and the happiness of all about him.

Arachne and Melissa are two friends. They are both of them women in years, and alike in birth, fortune, education, and accomplishments. They were originally alike in temper too; but by different management are grown the reverse of each other. Arachne has accustomed herself to look only on the dark side of every object. If a new poem or play makes its appearance, with a thousand brilliancies, and but one or two blemishes, she slightly skims over the passages that should give her pleasure, and dwells upon those only that fill her with dislike. If you show her a very excellent portrait, she looks at some part of the drapery which has been neglected, or to a hand or finger that has been left unfinished. Her garden is a very beautiful one, and kept with great neatness and elegance; but if you take a walk with her in it, she talks to you of nothing but blights and storms, of snails and caterpillars, and how impossible it is to keep it from the litter of falling leaves and worm-casts. If you sit down in one of her temples, to enjoy a delightful prospect, she observes to you, that there is too much wood or too little water; that the day is too sunny or too gloomy; that it is sultry, or windy; and finishes with a long harangue upon the wretchedness of our climate. When you return with her to the company, in hopes of a little cheerful conversation, she casts a gloom over all, by giving you the history of her own bad health, or of some melancholy accident that has be-

fallen one of her daughter's children. Thus she insensibly sinks her own spirits, and the spirits of all around her, and at last discovers, she knows not why, that her friends are grave.

Melissa is the reverse of all this. By constantly habituating herself to look only on the bright side of objects, she preserves a perpetual cheerfulness in herself, which, by a kind of happy contagion, she communicates to all about her. If any misfortune has befallen her, she considers it might have been worse, and is thankful to Providence for an escape. She rejoices in solitude, as it gives her an opportunity of knowing herself; and in society, because she can communicate the happiness she enjoys. She opposes every man's virtues to his failings, and can find out something to cherish and applaud in the very worst of her acquaintance. She opens every book with a desire to be entertained or instructed, and therefore seldom misses what she looks for. Walk with her, though it be but a heath or a common, and she will discover numberless beauties, unobserved before, in the hills, the dales, the broom, the brakes, and the variegated flowers of weeds and poppies. She enjoys every change of weather and of season, as bringing with it something of health or convenience. In conversation it is a rule with her never to start a subject that leads to any thing gloomy or disagreeable; you therefore never hear her repeating her own grievances, or those of her neighbours, or (what is worst of all) their faults or imperfections. If any thing of the latter kind be mentioned in her hearing, she has had the address to turn it into entertainment, by changing the most odious railing into a pleasant raillery. Thus Melissa, like the bee, gathers honey from every weed; while Arachne, like the spider, sucks poison from the fairest flowers. The con-

sequence is, that of two tempers, once very nearly allied, the one is for ever sour and dissatisfied, the other always gay and cheerful; the one spreads a universal gloom; the other a continual sunshine.

There is nothing more worthy of our attention than this art of happiness. In conversation, as well as life, happiness very often depends upon the slightest incidents. The taking notice of the badness of the weather, a north-east wind, the approach of winter, or any trifling circumstance of the disagreeable kind, shall insensibly rob a whole company of its good humour, and fling every member of it into the vapours. If therefore we would be happy in ourselves, and are desirous of communicating that happiness to all about us, these minutiae of conversation ought carefully to be attended to. The brightness of the sky, the lengthening of the days, the increasing verdure of the spring, the arrival of any little piece of good news, or whatever carries with it the most distant glimpse of joy, shall frequently be the parent of a social and happy conversation. Good manners exact from us this regard to our company. The clown may repine at the sunshine that ripens his harvest, because his turnips are burnt up by it; but the man of refinement will extract pleasure from the thunder-storm to which he is exposed, by remarking on the plenty and refreshment which may be expected from such a shower.

Thus does good manners, as well as good sense, direct us to look at every object on the bright side; and by thus acting we cherish and improve both the one and the other. By this practice it is that Melissa is become the wisest and best-bred woman living; and by this practice may every man and woman arrive at that easy benevolence of temper, which the world calls good-nature, and the scripture

charity, whose natural and never-failing fruit is happiness.

I cannot better conclude this paper than with the following ode, which I received from another correspondent, and which seems to be written in the same spirit of cheerfulness with the above essay :

ODE TO MORNING.

The sprightly messenger of day,
To heaven ascending tunes the lay,
That wakes the blushing Morn :
Cheer'd with th' inspiring notes, I rise,
And hail the Power, whose glad supplies
Th' enliven'd plains adorn.

Far hence, retire, O Night ! thy praise,
Majestic queen ; in nobler rays
Already has been sung :
When thine own spheres expire, thy name
Secure from time, shall rise in fame,
Immortalized by Young.

See, while I speak, Aurora sheds
Her early honours o'er the meads,
The springing valleys smile ;
With cheerful haste, the village swain
Renews the labours of the plain,
And meets th' accustom'd toil.

Day's monarch comes to bless the year !
Wing'd Zephyrs wanton round his car,
Along th' ethereal road ;
Plenty and Health attend his beams,
And Truth, divinely bright, proclaims
The visit of the God.

Awed by the view, my soul reveres
The great First Cause, that bade the spheres
In tuneful order move :
Thine is the sable-mantled night,
Unseen Almighty! and the light
The radiance of thy love.

Hark! the awaken'd grove repays
With melody the genial rays,
And echo spreads the strain ;
The streams in grateful murmurs run,
The bleating flocks salute the sun,
And music glads the plain.

While Nature thus her charms displays,
Let me enjoy the fragrant breeze,
That op'ning flowers diffuse ;
Temp'rance and Innocence attend,
These are your haunts, your influence lend,
Associates of the Muse !

Riot, and Guilt, and wasting Care,
And fell Revenge, and black Despair,
Avoid the morning's light ;
Nor beams the sun, nor blooms the rose
Their restless passions to compose,
Who Virtue's dictates slight.

Along the mead, and in the wood,
And on the margin of the flood,
The Goddess walks confest ;
She gives the landscape power to charm,
The sun his genial heat, to warm
The wise and generous breast.

Happy the man ! whose tranquil mind
Sees Nature in her changes kind,
And pleased the whole surveys ;

For him the morn benignly smiles,
And evening shades reward the toils
That measure out his days.

The varying year may shift the scene,
The sounding tempest lash the main,
And Heaven's own thunders roll;
Calmly he views the bursting storm,
Tempests nor thunder can deform
The morning of his soul.

C. B.

No. 127 THURSDAY, JUNE 5, 1755.

*Quis novus hic nostris successit sedibus hospes?
Quem sese ore ferens?—* VIRG.

ALTHOUGH I profess myself a zealous advocate for modern fashion, and have countenanced some of its boldest innovations, yet I cannot but recall my approbation, when I see it making some very irregular and unjustifiable sallies, in opposition to true policy and reasons of state. In testimony of the perfect quietism I have hitherto observed in this respect, I defy any one to convict me of having uttered one syllable in praise of the good roast beef of Old England, since the conspiracy set on foot by the Creolian epicures totally to banish it our island. On the other hand, it is well known I have been lately present at a turtle feast in person, and have at this very hour several more engagements upon my hands. I have acquiesced likewise with great and sudden revolutions in dress, as well as taste: I have submitted, in opposition to the clamours of a numerous party, to dismantling the intrenchments of the hoop, on a tacit promise from my fair countrywomen (in compliance to the application of the young men) that

they would leave the small of the leg at least as visible as before. I have made no objection to their wearing the cardinal, though it be a habit of popish etymology, and was, I am afraid, first invented to hide the sluttishness of French dishabille. Nay, I have even connived at the importation of rouge, upon serious conviction that a fine woman has an incontestable right to be mistress of her own complexion; neither do I know that we have any pretence to subject her to the necessity of telling us on the morrow, the late hours she was under engagement to keep the night before; a grievance, which, through the extreme delicacy of her natural complexion, could no otherwise be remedied.

My absolute compliance in so many important instances will, I hope, secure me from any imputation of prejudice against the dominion of fashion, which I am at last under the necessity of opposing, as it has introduced under its sanction one of the most dangerous and impolitic customs that was ever admitted into a commonwealth, which is the unnatural and unconstitutional practice of inoculation. The evil tendency of this practice I have such unanswerable arguments to evince, as I doubt not will banish it our island, and send it back to the confines of Circassia, from whence one could hardly suspect a lady of quality would have been so wicked as to have imported it.

I must first premise, which is not greatly to its credit, that it is of Turkish extraction; and (to speak as a *man*) I profess I dread lest it should be a means of introducing, in these *opera days*, some more alarming practices of the seraglio.

It seems likewise, by-the-by, to strike at the belief of *absolute predestination*; for (as a zealous Calvinist gravely remarked) is it not very presumptuous for a

young lady to attempt securing not above twenty spots in her face, when perhaps it is *absolutely decreed* she shall have two hundred, or none at all?

But to my first argument. The world, in general (for I pay no regard to what the author of the Persian letters asserts to the contrary), is certainly much over-peopled; and the proofs of it in this metropolis we cannot but visibly remark, in the constant labour of builders, masons, &c. to fit up habitations for the increasing supernumeraries. This inconvenience had in a great measure been hitherto prevented, by the proper number of people who were daily removed by the small-pox in the natural way; one, at least, in seven dying, to the great ease and convenience of the survivors; whereas since inoculation has prevailed, all hopes of thinning our people that way are entirely at an end; not above one in three hundred being taken off, to the great incumbrance of society. So that, unless we should speedily have a war upon the continent, we shall be in danger of being eaten up with famine at home, through the multiplicity of our people, whom we have taken this unnatural method of keeping alive.

My second argument was suggested to me by a very worthy country gentleman of my acquaintance, whom I met this morning, taking some fresh air in the park. I accosted him with the free impertinence of a friend at the first interview. ‘What brought you to town, sir?’ ‘My wife, sir (says he, in a very melancholy tone), my wife. It had pleased her, the first four years of our marriage, to live peaceably in the country, and to employ herself in setting out her table, visiting her neighbours, or attending her nursery: and if ever a wish broke out after the diversions of the town, it was easily soothed down again, by my saying, with accents of tenderness, My dear, we would

certainly see London this spring, but my last letters tell me the small pox is very much there. But no sooner had she heard the fatal success of inoculation, than she insisted on the trial of it; has succeeded; and having baffled my old valuable argument to keep her in the country, has hurried me to town, and is now most industriously making up her four years loss of time at the abbey, by entering with the most courageous spirit into every party of pleasure she can possibly partake of.'

The inference I would make from my friend's story is, not that the nation is deprived hereby of a convenient bugbear to confine ladies to the country,—an abuse I would by no means countenance; but to show only to our sagacious politicians, who are searching for more important reasons, that it is undoubtedly owing to the increase of inoculation, together with the number of convenient turnpikes, that so many of our worthy country gentlemen have evacuated their hospitable seats, and roll away with safety and tranquillity to town, to the great diminution of country neighbourhood, and the insufferable incumbrance of all public places in this metropolis.

Another ill consequence of this practice I have remarked more than once, in walking round the circle at Ranelagh. Beauties are naturally disposed to be a little insolent; and a consciousness of superior charms, where the possession is confirmed to the party, is very apt to break out into little triumphant airs and sallies of haughtiness towards those of avowed inferiority in that respect. Hence that air of defiance, so visible in the looks of our finest women, which in the last age was softened and corrected with some small traits of meekness and timidity; while the unhappy group of plain women, who bear about them those honourable scars for which they ought to be

revered, can scarcely meet with a beauty who will drop them a curtsy, or a beau who will lead them to their chariots.

Neither do I think it for the advantage of a commonwealth to be overstocked with beauties. They are undoubtedly the most suitable furniture for public places, very proper objects to embellish an assembly room, and the prettiest points of view in the park; but it is believed by some, that your plain women, whose understandings are not perverted by admiration, make the discreetest wives, and the best mothers: so that to secure a constant supply of fit and ugly women to act in these necessary capacities, this modern invention for the preservation of pretty faces ought no doubt to be abolished; since, on a just computation, ten fine women per annum (which we can never want in England) will be sufficient to entertain the *beau monde* for a whole season, and completely furnish all the public places every night, if properly disposed.

I had some thoughts of laying these arguments against inoculation before the legislature, in hopes that they would strengthen them with their authority, and give them the sanction of a law against so pernicious an invention: but I was discouraged by a friend, who convinced me, that however just I might be in my opinion that our people were growing too numerous, and in the cause to which I imputed it, the pernicious success of inoculation; yet it might be impolitic to attempt reducing them at this critical season, when the legislature may have occasion to dispose of them some other way. He proposed to me, as the most effectual means of suppressing this growing evil, that it should be recommended to some zealous and fashionable preacher to denounce his anathemas against it, which would not fail to deter

all ladies of quality from the practice of it. But I would rather propose that a golden medal should be given by the college of physicians to the ablest of the profession, who should publish the completest treatise to prove (as undoubtedly might be proved) 'That whatever distemper any person shall die of at seventy years of age must infallibly be owing to his having been inoculated at seven: and that every person who has had the small pox by inoculation may have it afterwards ten times in the natural way.'

No. 128. THURSDAY, JUNE 12, 1755.

MONTAIGNE tells us of a gentleman of his country, much troubled with the gout, who being advised by his physicians to abstain from salt meats, asked what else they would give him to quarrel with in the extremity of his fits; for that he imagined, cursing one minute the Bologna sausages, and another the dried tongues he had eaten, was some mitigation of his pain.

If all men, when they are either out of health, or out of humour, would vent their rage after the manner of this Frenchman, the world would be a much quieter one than we see it at present. But dried tongues and sausages have no feeling of our displeasure; therefore we reserve it for one another; and he that can wound his neighbour in his fame, or sow the seeds of discord in his family, derives happiness to himself.

I once knew a husband and wife, who without having the least tincture of affection for each other,

or any single accomplishment of mind or person, made a shift to live comfortably enough, by contributing equally to the abuse of their acquaintance. The consideration of one another's uneasiness, or what was still better, that it was in their power to inflict it, kept pain, sickness, and misfortune from touching them too nearly. They collected separately the scandal of the day, and made themselves company for one another, by consulting how they might disperse it with additions and improvements. I have known the wife to have been cured of a fit of the colic, by the husband's telling her that a young lady of her acquaintance was run off with her father's footman; and I once saw the husband sit with a face of delight to have a tooth drawn, upon my bringing him the news that a very particular friend of his was a bankrupt in the Gazette. Their losses at cards were what chiefly tormented them; not so much from a principle of avarice, as from the consideration that what they had lost, others had won; and upon these occasions the family peace has been sometimes disturbed. But a fresh piece of scandal, or a new misfortune befalling any of the neighbourhood, has immediately set matters right, and made them the happiest people in the world.

I think it is an observation of the witty and ingenious author of *Tom Jones* (I forget his words) that the only unhappy situation in marriage is a state of indifference. Where people love one another, says he, they have great pleasure in obliging; and where they hate one another, they have equal pleasure in tormenting. But where they have neither love nor hatred, and of consequence no desire either to please or plague, there can be no such thing as happiness. That this observation may be true in general, I very readily allow; yet I have instanced a

couple who, though as indifferent to each other as it was possible for man and wife to be, have yet contrived to be happy through the misfortunes of their friends.

But it is nevertheless true of happiness, that it is principally to be found at home; and therefore it is, that in most families one visits, one sees the husband and wife (instead of contenting themselves with the miseries of their neighbours) mutually plaguing one another: and after a succession of disputes, contradictions, mortifications, sneers, pouts, abuses, and sometimes blows, they retreat separately into company, and are the easiest and pleasantest people alive.

That this is to be mutually happy, I believe few married couples will deny; especially if they have lived together a fortnight, and of course are grown tired of obliging. But it has been very luckily discovered, that as our sorrows are lessened by participation, so also are our joys; and that unless the pleasure of tormenting be confined entirely to one party, the happiness of either can by no means be perfect. The wife therefore of a meek and tender disposition, who makes it the study of her life to please and oblige her husband, and to whom he is indebted for every advantage he enjoys, is the fittest object of his tyranny and aversion. Upon such a wife he may exert himself nobly, and have all the pleasure to himself; but I would advise him to enjoy it with some little caution, because (though the weekly bills take no notice of it) there is really such a disease as a broken heart; and the misfortune is, that there is no tormenting a dead wife.

Happy is the husband of such a woman: for unless a man goes into company with the conscious pleasure of having left his wife miserable at home, his temper may not be proof against every accident

he may meet with abroad; but having first of all discharged his spleen and ill-humour upon his own family, he goes into company prepared to be pleased and happy with every thing that occurs: or if crosses and disappointments should unavoidably happen, he has a wife to repair to, on whom he can bestow with interest every vexation he has received. Thus it was honestly and wisely said by the old serjeant of seventy, who, when his officer asked him how he came to marry at so great an age, answered, 'Why, and please your honour, they teaze and put me out of humour abroad, and so I go home and beat my wife.' And indeed happy is it for society that men have commonly such repositories for their ill-humours; for I can truly assert, that the easiest, the best-natured, and the most entertaining man I know out of his own house, is the most tyrannical master, brother, husband, and father in the whole world; and who, if he had no family to make miserable at home, would be the constant disturber of every party abroad.

But I am far from limiting this particular privilege to the husband: the wife has it sometimes in her power to enjoy equal happiness. For instance, when a woman of family and spirit condescends to marry for a maintenance a wealthy citizen, whose delight is in peace, quietness, and domestic endearments; such a woman may continually fill his house with routs and hurricanes; she may teaze and fret him with her superiority of birth; she may torment his heart with jealousy, and waste his substance in rioting and gaming. She will have one advantage too over the male tyrant, inasmuch as she may carry her triumph beyond the grave, by making the children of her husband's footman the inheritors of his fortune.

Thus, as an advocate for matrimony, I have entered

into a particular disquisition of its principal comforts; and that no motives may be wanting to induce men to engage in it, I have endeavoured to show that it is next to an impossibility for a couple to miscarry, since hatred as well as love, and indifference as well as either (I mean if people have sense enough to make a right use of their friends' misfortunes) is sufficient for happiness. Indeed it is hard to guess, when one reads in the public papers that a treaty of marriage is on foot between the right honourable lord Somebody, and lady Betty Such-a-one, whether his lordship's and the lady's passion be love or hatred: and, to say truth, it is of very little consequence to which of these passions their desire of coming together is first owing; it being at least six to four, that in the compass of a month they hate one another heartily. But let not this deter any of my readers from entering into the state of matrimony; since the pleasure of obliging the object of our desires, is at least equalled by the pleasure of tormenting the object of our aversion.

No. 129. THURSDAY, JUNE 19, 1755.

I SHALL make no apology for the following miscellaneous letters, unless it be to the writers of them, for so long delaying their publication.

TO MR. FITZ-ADAM.

SIR,

The late Earl Marshal applying to a bookseller at Paris for some English books, was answered by the Frenchman that he had none in his shop, except *une petite barntelle*, called the Bible. Your readers will

be informed, that this *petite bagatelle*, as the bookseller termed it, contains (among other matters) some little treatises of eastern wisdom, and particularly certain maxims collected by one King Solomon, of whom mention is made in Prior's poems. Solomon was, as Captain Bluff says of Scipio, a pretty fellow in his day, though most of his maxims have been confuted by experience. But I only make mention of him, to show how exactly the *virtuous woman* of that monarch corresponds with the *fine lady* of the present times.

Who can find a virtuous woman? says Solomon. By the way, he must have kept sad company, or else *virtuous women* were extremely scarce in those days; for it will be no boast to say that five thousand *virtuous women* may be assembled at any time in this metropolis, on a *night's* warning. Solomon describes the character so that it is not easy to mistake it. *She bringeth her food from afar.* That is to say the tea-table of the *virtuous woman* is supplied with sugar and cordials from Barbadoes, and with tea from China: the bread and butter and scandal only being the produce of her native country. *She riseth whilst it is yet night.* This cannot literally be said of our modern *virtuous women*; but one may venture to assert, that if to rise *whilst it is yet night* be the characteristic of virtue, to *sit up the whole night*, and thereby have no occasion for rising at all, must imply no ordinary measure of goodness. *She strengtheneth her arms.* This is a circumstance of some delicacy: such mysteries suit not the vulgar ear. The husband of the *virtuous woman* may say, as the poet says of friendship with the great, *expertus metuit.* *She maketh herself coverings of tapestry; her clothing is silk and purple.* This plainly indicates that no lady can be consummately *virtuous*, unless she wear brocaded silks, and robings of French embroidery. To these Solomon, with all the accuracy of a tire-woman,

adds purple ribbons. This passage is liable to misapplication; but the words *she maketh herself coverings*, mean not that a *virtuous woman* must of necessity be a work-woman; *to make*, signifies *to occasion the making of any thing*: thus a person is said to *make interest*, when, in truth, it is not he, but his money that makes the interest. Thus Augustus fought battles by proxy; and thus many respectable personages beget children. So that a *virtuous woman* need not embroider in person: let her *pay* for the work she bespeaks, and no more is required. *Her husband is known in the gates*. More universally known by his relation to his wife, than by his own name. Thus you are told at public places, ‘That is Mrs. Such-a-one’s husband, or he that married Lady Such-a-one.’ *He sitteth among the elders of the land*. At White’s, where the elders of the land assemble themselves.

Let me add one more instance of the similitude between a *fine lady* and the *virtuous woman* of Solomon, and I have done. When a lady returns home, at five in the morning, from the nocturnal mysteries of brag, how must the heart of her husband exult, when he sees her flambeaux rivalling the light of the sun! May he not cry out in the words of the eastern monarch, *Blessed is the virtuous woman; her candle goeth not out by night?*

I am, sir,

Your most humble servant.

MR. FITZ-ADAM,

I have had the honour of sitting in the three last parliaments: for as it was always my opinion that an honest man should sacrifice every private consideration to the service of his country, I spared no expense at my elections, nor afterwards to support

an interest in my borough, by giving annuities to half the corporation, building a town-hall, a market-house, a new steeple to the church, together with a present of a ring of bells, that used to stun me with their noise. To defray all these expenses, I was obliged to mortgage my estate to its full value, excepting only two thousand pounds, which sum I took up against the last general election, and went down to my borough, where I was told there would be an opposition. What I heard was true; an absolute stranger had declared himself a candidate; and though I spent every farthing of my two thousand pounds, and was promised the vote and interest of the mayor and corporation, they every man of them went against me, and I lost my election.

As I have now no opportunity of serving my country, and have a wife and seven small children to maintain, I have been at last concerting measures how I might do a small service to myself: and as there are many worthy gentlemen at present in the same unfortunate situation, I cannot think of a better expedient than to recommend to the parliament, at their next meeting, the passing an act for raising a fund towards the building and endowing an hospital for the relief and support of decayed members. I mention it thus early, because I would give the legislature time to deliberate upon such a proposal. And surely, Mr. Fitz-Adam, if the loss of a limb shall be sufficient to entitle the meanest soldier or sailor in the service to this privilege, how much more worthy of relief is the disabled patriot, who has sacrificed his family and fortune to the interest of his country.

Your inserting this letter will greatly oblige, sir,

Your very humble servant,

B. D.

P. S. All gentlemen residing in town, who have lost their fortunes by former parliaments, and their elections in this, are desired to meet on Saturday, the 21st of this instant June, at three o'clock in the afternoon, at the Cat and Bagpipe, in St. Giles's, to consider of the above proposal, or of any other ways and means for their immediate support.

N. B. A dinner will be provided at nine-pence a head.

SIR,

The prostitution of characters, given in behalf of bad servants, has been long a grievance, demanding the attention of the public. Give me leave to awaken it, by a specimen from my own experience.

Some time since, an old servant left me, upon short notice. I had another recommended, as *very honest*, by a neighbouring family, whom he had served. As I was pressed for time, I took him upon that single qualification in lieu of all the rest; and, relying upon the repeated assurance of his integrity, reposed an entire confidence in him. In some little time, however, finding an increase of expense in the articles under his particular management, I discovered, upon observation, that the perquisites, or rather plunder of his province, had been nearly doubled. His dismissal, you may imagine, ensued, and complaint to the persons who had recommended him. The answer was, that they knew him to be a sad fellow, by the tricks he had played them; but that they would not say a word of it, because they thought it *wicked* to hinder him of a place.

Now, Mr. Fitz-Adam, I conceive it to be but a *wicked world*, when gentlemen will help thieves and robbers to get into people's houses; and I shall take for the future a bare acquittal at the Old

Bailey, as a better recommendation than that of such a friend.

I am, sir,
Your humble servant,
A. B.

The abuse complained of by this correspondent is of too serious a nature to be passed over slightly. It is to this mistaken compassion that the disorderly behaviour of servants is, perhaps, principally owing: for if the punishment of dishonesty be only a change of place (which may be a reward, instead of a punishment) it ceases to be a servant's interest to be true to his trust.

This prostitution of characters (as my correspondent calls it) is grown so common, that a servant, after he has committed the most palpable robbery, for which you are turning him out of doors, and which would go near to hang him at the Old Bailey, looks composedly in your face, and very modestly hopes that you will not refuse him a character, for that you are too worthy a gentleman to be the ruin of a poor servant, who has nothing but his character to depend on for bread. So away he goes, and you are really so *very worthy a gentleman* as to assure the first person who inquires about him, that he is a sober, diligent, and *faithful* servant. Thus are you accessory to the next robbery he commits, and ought, in my humble opinion, to be deemed little less than an accessory by the law; for the servant who opens the door of his master's house to the thief that plunders it differs from you only in the motive; the consequences are the same.

I have said in a former paper, that the behaviour of servants depends in a great measure on that of their masters and mistresses. In this instance, I am sure it does: I shall therefore conclude this paper

with advising all heads of families to give *honest* characters before they allow themselves to exclaim against *dishonest* servants.

No. 130. THURSDAY, JUNE 26, 1755.

TO MR. FITZ-ADAM.

SIR,

WHEN your first World made its appearance, I was just entering into, what is called, polite life, and was mightily pleased at your promising to direct young maids how to get husbands. I was then just eighteen; not disagreeable in my person; and, by the tender care of indulgent parents, had been instructed in all the necessary accomplishments towards making a good wife, a good mother, and a sincere friend. I resolved to keep strictly to all the rules you should prescribe, and did not doubt but by the time I was twenty I should have choice of admirers, or very probably be married. But, would you believe it? I have not so much as one man who makes any sort of pretensions to me. I am at a loss to account for this, as I have not been guilty of any of those errors, which you and all sober men exclaim so much against: I hate routs, seldom touch a card, and when I do, it is more to oblige others than myself. Plays are the only public amusements I frequent; but I go only to good ones, and then always in good company.—Don't think by good company I mean quality; for I assure you I never go to any public place but with people of unexceptionable character. My complexion is of the olive kind; yet I have the assurance to show my bare face, though I have been often told it is very indecent.

However, to atone in some measure for this neglect, I never am seen without a handkerchief, nor with my petticoats above my shoes.

Though my fortune is rather beyond what is called genteel, I never run into any extravagancy in dress ; and, to avoid particularity, am never the first nor the last in a fashion. I am an utter enemy to scandal, and never go out of a morning either to auctions or the park. If by chance I am alone a whole afternoon, I am never at a loss how to spend my time, being fond of reading. I have an aversion to coquetry, yet am the cheerfullest creature living, and never better pleased than when joining in a country dance, which I can do for a whole night together, without either falling in love with my partner, if agreeable, or quarrelling with him, if awkward.

Girls may pretend to deny it, but certainly the whole tenor of their actions leads to the disposing of themselves advantageously in the world. Some set about it one way, and some another ; all of them choosing what they think the most likely method to succeed. Now I am sure, when they pursue a wrong one, that nine times in ten it is owing to the men ; for were they to admire women for virtue, prudence, good humour, and good sense, as well as beauty, we should seek no other ornaments. The men ought to set the example, and then reward those who follow it, by making them good husbands. But instead of this, they make it their business to turn the heads of all the girls they meet ; which when they have effectually done, they exclaim against the folly of the whole sex, and either cheat us of our fortunes by marrying our grandmothers, or die bachelors.

Now pray, Mr. Fitz-Adam, as this is the case, what encouragement has a young woman to set

about improving her mind? I am sure, in the small circle of my acquaintance, I have known several women who have reached their thirtieth year unnoticed, whose good qualities are such as would make it difficult to find men to deserve them.

In public places, the coquette, with a small share of beauty, and that perhaps artificial, shall, with the most trifling conversation in the world, engross the attention of a whole circle; while the woman of modesty and sense is forced to be silent, because she cannot be heard. Thus when we find that it is not merit which recommends us to the notice of the men, can it be wondered at, that while we are desirous of changing our conditions, we try every innocent artifice to accomplish our designs?

As to myself, I have a great respect for the married state; but if I cannot meet with a man that will take me just as nature has formed me, I will live single for ever: for it has been always a rule with me never to expect the least advantage from the possession of any thing, which is not to be attained but at the expense of truth.

I am not so vain, Mr. Fitz-Adam, as to imagine this letter will merit a place in your paper; all I desire is, that you will oblige me so far as to write a *World* upon the subject; and might I advise, let the women alone, and apply yourself entirely to the reformation of the men: for when once they begin to cherish any thing valuable and praiseworthy in themselves, you will soon find the women to follow their example.

I am, sir,
Your constant reader and admirer,
M. S.

MR. FITZ-ADAM,

You have often animadverted on the present fashionable indecencies of female dress ; but I wish you would please now and then to look a little at home, and bestow some of your charitable advice upon your own sex.

You are to know, sir, that I am one of three old maids, who, though no relations, have resolved to live and die together. Our fortunes, which singly are but small, enable us, when put together, to live genteelly, and to keep two maids and a footman. Patrick has lived with us now going on of six years, and, to do him justice, is a sober, cleanly, and diligent servant : indeed, by studying our tempers, and paying a silent obedience to all our whims (for we do not pretend to be without whims) he has made himself so useful, that there is no doing without him. We give him no livery, but allow him a handsome sum yearly for clothes ; and to say the truth, till within this last week, he has dressed with great propriety and decency ; when all at once, to our great confusion and distress, he has had the assurance to appear at the sideboard in a pair of filthy naukin breeches, and those made to fit so extremely tight, that a less curious observer might have mistaken them for no breeches at all. The shame and confusion so visible in all our faces, one would think, should suggest to him the odiousness of his dress ; but the fellow seems to have thrown off every appearance of decency : for at tea-table, before company, as well as at meals, we are forced to endure him in this abominable nankin, our modesty all the time struggling with nature, to efface the ideas it conveys.

For the first two days, though we could think of nothing else, shame kept us silent even to one another ;

but we could hold out no longer; yet what to determine neither of us knew. Patrick, as I told you before, was a good servant, and to turn him away for a single fault, when that fault would in all probability be remedied by a word's speaking, seemed to be carrying the matter a little too far. But which of us was to speak to him was the grand question. The word breeches (though I am prevailed upon to write it) was too coarse to be pronounced; and to say, 'Patrick, we don't like that dress,' or, 'Pray, Patrick, dress in another manner,' was laying us under a necessity of pointing at his breeches to make ourselves understood. Nor did it seem at all advisable to set either Betty or Hannah upon doing it, as it might possibly draw them into explanations, that might be attended with very puzzling, if not dangerous consequences.

After having deliberated some days upon this cruel exigence, and not knowing which way to look whenever Patrick was in the room, nor daring to shut our eyes, or turn our backs upon him, for fear of his discovering the cause; it occurred to me, that if I could muster up courage to inform Mr. Fitz-Adam of our distresses (for we constantly take in the World, of which Patrick is also a reader) it might be a means of relieving us from this perpetual blushing and confusion. If you walk abroad in the morning, or are a frequenter of auctions, you cannot but have taken notice of this odious fashion. But I should like it better, if you were to pass your censure upon nankin breeches in general, than to have those of our Patrick taken notice of particularly: however I leave it entirely to your own choice; and whatever method you may take to discountenance the wearing of them, will be perfectly agreeable to,

Sir, your most humble servant,

PRISCILLA CROSS-STITCH.

The case of this lady and her companions is so exceeding critical, that for fear Patrick should be backward at taking a hint, I have thought it the wisest way to publish her letter just as I received it; and if after this day Patrick should again presume to appear before his ladies, cased in nankin, I hereby authorize Mrs. Betty or Mrs. Hannah to burn his breeches wherever they can find them.

To be serious upon this occasion, I have often looked upon this piece of naked drapery as a very improper part of dress; and as such I hereby declare, that after this present 26th day of June it shall be a capital offence against decency and modesty, for any person whatsoever to be seen to wear it.

N. B. All canvas or linen breeches come within the act.

No. 131. THURSDAY, JULY 3, 1755.

THE conversation happening, a few evenings ago, to turn upon the different employments of mankind, we fell into the consideration how ill the various parts of life are generally suited to the persons who appear in them. This was attributed either to their own ambition, which tempts them to undertake a character they have not abilities to perform with credit, or to some accidental circumstance, which throws them into professions contrary perhaps, both to their genius and inclination. All were unanimous in blaming those parents who force their children to enter into a way of life contrary to their natural bent, which generally points out the employment that is best adapted to their capacities. To this we in a great

measure ascribed the slow progress of arts and sciences, the frequent failures and miscarriages of life, and many of those desperate acts which are often the consequences of them.

This conversation carried us through the greatest part of the evening, till the company broke up and retired to rest. But the weather being hot, and my senses perfectly awake, I found it impossible to give way to sleep; so that my thoughts soon returned to the late subject of the evening's entertainment. I recollected many instances of this misapplication of parts, and compassionated the unhappy effects of it. I reflected that as all men have different ideas of pleasures and honours, different views, inclinations, and capacities; yet all concur in a desire of pleasing and excelling: if that principle were employed to the proper point, and every one employed himself agreeably to his genius, what a wonderful effect would it soon have in the world! With how swift a progress would arts and sciences grow up to perfection! And to what an amazing height would all kind of knowledge soon be carried! Men would no longer drudge on with distaste and murmuring in a study they abhor; but every one would pursue with cheerfulness his proper calling; business would become the highest pleasure; diligence would be too universal to be esteemed a virtue; and no man would be ashamed of an employment, in which he appeared to advantage.

While my mind hung upon these reflections, I imperceptibly dropt asleep. But my imagination surviving my reason, I soon entered into a dream, which (though mixed with wild flights and absurdities) bore some analogy to my waking thoughts.

I fancied myself still reflecting on the same subject, when I was suddenly snatched up into the air,

and presently found myself on the poets' Olympus, at the right hand of Jupiter ; who told me, that he approved my thoughts, and would make an immediate experiment of the change I had been wishing for.

He had no sooner pronounced these words, than I perceived a strange hurry and confusion in the lower world : all mankind was in motion, preparing to obey the tremendous nod.

Multitudes of the nobility began to strip themselves of their robes and coronets, and to act in the different capacities of horse-jockeys, coachmen, tailors, fiddlers, and merry-andrews. I distinguished two or three great personages, who had dressed themselves in white waistcoats, and with napkins wrapped about their heads, and aprons tucked round their waists, were busied in several great kitchens, making considerable improvements in the noble art of cookery. A few of this illustrious rank, without quitting their honourable distinctions, applied themselves to enlarging the discoveries, enlightening the understandings, rectifying the judgments, refining the tastes, polishing the manners, improving the hearts, and by all possible methods promoting the interests of their fellow-creatures.

I saw reverend prelates, who, tearing off their lawn, put themselves into red coats, and soon obtained triumphs and ovations ; while others dwindled into parish clerks, and village pedagogues. But I observed with pleasure several of that sacred order in my own country, who appeared calm and unchanged amidst the general bustle, and seemed to be designed originally to do honour to their exalted stations.

There were several grave old men, who threw off their scarlet robes, and retired to religious houses. I saw with wonder some of these deserted robes put on by private gentlemen, who, lost in retirement and

reserve, were little imagined to be qualified for such important posts. But what more astonished me was to see men of military rank throwing away their regimentals, and appearing with much better grace in longer suits of scarlet. Some gentlemen of the robe, whom I had always regarded with respect and reverence, seemed now more awful and respectable than ever: one in particular greatly surprised me, by quitting the seat of judgment, which he had long filled with universal applause, till I saw him entering a more august assembly, and afterwards passing to the cabinet of his prince, from whence he returned to the great hall, where first I observed him, and convinced me of the extent of his abilities, by appearing equally capable in all his employments.

I saw in a public assembly a junto of patriots, who, while they were haranguing on the corruption and iniquity of the times, broke off in the middle, and turned stock-jobbers and pawn-brokers. A group of critics at the Bedford coffee-house were in an instant converted into haberdashers of small-ware in Cheapside. Translators, commentators, and polemic divines, made for the most part very good cobblers, gold-finders, and rat-catchers. The chariot of a very eminent physician was transformed all at once into a cart, and the doctor to an executioner, fastening a halter round the neck of a criminal. I saw two very noted surgeons of my acquaintance in blue sleeves and aprons, exerting themselves notably in a slaughter-house near the Victualling-office. A reverend divine, who was preaching in the fields to a numerous audience, recollected himself on a sudden, and producing a set of cups and balls, performed several very dexterous tricks by slight of hand. The pretty gentlemen were every where usefully employed in knotting, pickling, and making preserves. The fine ladies remained as they were; for it was beyond even the

omnipotence of Jupiter (without entirely changing their natures) to assign an office in which they could be beneficial to mankind.

Several princes and potentates now relieved themselves from the load of crowns and sceptres, and entered with a good grace into private stations. Others put themselves at the head of companies of banditti, formed of lawyers, public officers, and excisemen. Their prime ministers had generally the honour of being their first lieutenants, and sometimes enjoyed the sole command; while the courtiers ranged themselves under them in rank and file. But with what heartfelt pleasure did I observe an august and venerable monarch, surrounded by a youthful band, with the most amiable countenances I had ever beheld! He wore a triple crown upon his head, which an angel held on, and over it a scroll, with this inscription, *For a grateful and affectionate people.*

The shops now began to be filled with people of distinction; and many a man stept with a genteel air from behind the counter, into a great estate, or a post of honour.

The nobility were almost all changed throughout the world: for no man dared to answer to a title of superiority, who was not conscious of superior excellence and virtue.

In the midst of all this bustle, I was struck with the appearance of a large bevy of beauties, and women of the first fashion, who, with all the perfect confidence of good breeding, inshrined themselves in the several temples dedicated to the Cyprian Venus, secure of the universal adorations and prostrations of mankind. Others, of inferior rank and fame, very unconcernedly pursued their domestic affairs, and the occupations of the needle or the toilette. But it was with a secret pride that I observed a few of my dear countrywomen quit their

dressing-rooms and card-assemblies, and venture into public, as candidates for fame and honours. One lady in particular, forced by the sacred impulse, I saw marching with modest composure to take possession of the warden's lodgings in one of our colleges; but observing some young students at the gate, who began to titter as she approached, she blushed, turned from them with an air of pity unmingled with contempt, and retiring to her beloved retreat, contented herself with doing all the good that was possible in a private station.

The face of affairs began now to be very much altered: all the great offices of state were filled with able men, who were equal to the glorious load; which they accepted for the good of their country, not for their own private emolument. Bribery and corruption were at length happily banished from all commonwealths; for as no man could be prevailed on to accept of an employment, for which he was not every way qualified, merit was the only claim to promotion.

Universal peace and tranquillity soon ensued. Arts and sciences daily received astonishing improvements. All men were alike emulous to excel in something; and no part was dishonourable to one who acted well. In short, the golden age of the poets seemed to be restored.

But while I was reflecting with joy and admiration on these glorious revolutions, the tumult of a midnight broil awaked me; and I found myself in a world as full of folly and absurdity as ever it was.

No. 132. THURSDAY, JULY 10, 1755.



It has been a perpetual objection of declaimers against Providence in all ages, that good and evil are very irregularly distributed among mankind; that the former is too often the portion of the vicious, and the latter of the virtuous. Numberless hypotheses have been framed to reconcile these appearances to the idea of a moral Supreme Being: I shall mention only two at the present, as they have been employed by writers of a very different turn.

Some of these writers assent to the truth of the fact, but endeavour to invalidate the conclusions raised on it, by arguments from reason and revelation for the proof of a future state; in which the seeming and real inconsistencies of this life will be adjusted agreeably to our ideas of a moral governor. Now objectors will answer, and indeed have answered, that arguments from reason to support this doctrine are extremely inconclusive. They may allow it is agreeable to the rules of just analogy to presume that the attributes of the Supreme Being, which are imperfectly known in the present life, will be manifested more clearly to our apprehensions in a future one: but they will call it an inversion of all reasonable arguments, to conclude, from thence, that the moral attributes will be discoverable in another state of being, when, by a confession of the fact, that good and evil are so irregularly distributed, no appearances of these attributes are supposed to exist in the present system, that book of nature, from which alone we collect that the Author of it is good as well as wise. As little will these objectors be

influenced by arguments from revelation. To prove natural religion by revelation (which can itself be erected on no other principle) they will call but fantastic reasoning in a circle. Revelation, they will say, presupposes the following truths, and depends upon their certainty; that there is a God, and that such evidences of his goodness and other attributes are discovered from his works, as in reason should induce us to rely with confidence on those oracles delivered to us as his word.

Other writers, who have undertaken a defence of Providence, attempt it in a different manner. They affirm it is vain presumption to imagine man the final end of the creation, who may be formed subserviently to nobler orders and systems of being: and that God governs by general, not particular laws; laws that respect our happiness as a community, not as individuals. But the same objectors will again reply, that it is inconsistent with our idea of a being infinitely good, to conceive him determining any creature to misery, however inferior in the order of general nature, or however formed relatively to superior beings and systems. They will think it not more reconcileable with our idea of a Being infinitely wise, to imagine him incapable of accommodating laws, however general, to the interest of every particular. They will desire an explanation how laws can respect the happiness of any system, which are supposed too generally to be productive of misery, even to the most valuable individuals that compose it.

This argument, drawn from the government of God by general, not particular laws, seems by no means to have been attended with the success it was entitled to: and it appears to have failed of this end, not from a defect in the argument itself, but either because it has been ill understood, or not

pursued to its full extent. When unbelievers declaim against the supposed unequal distribution of things, they in consequence condemn the general laws from which they proceed. To reply then that God governs by general, not particular laws, is a repetition only of the foundation of their complaints, not an answer to them. There is another mistake in the management of this argument. In the consideration of the excellence of human laws, we are not content with viewing them intrinsically in themselves; but compare them with the particular country, temper, manners, and other circumstances of that people for whom they are intended. Now in the consideration of divine laws, we have not pursued the same method; and for this reason, among others, unbelievers have triumphed in the imagined weakness of one of the noblest arguments that has ever been employed in the noblest of causes, a defence of Providence.

God governs by general, not particular laws, because the former alone are adapted to the condition of human kind. In this imperfect state we are entirely unacquainted with the real nature of those beings which surround us. We are ignorant from what principle or internal constitution they derive a power of operating on other beings, or in what manner the operation is performed. We have no knowledge of causes but in their effects, and in those effects alone, which are grossly visible to our material organs. We suppose the same effects invariably produced from the same causes, except where a miraculous power interposes, and supersedes for a moment the general course of nature, which resumes its former constancy, when the superior influence that controlled it is removed. Such rare exceptions do not perplex our conduct, which is regulated by the general rule: but to destroy this

general order as frequently as the imagined interest of individuals seems to us to require it, is to confound human knowledge, and, in consequence, human action. The husbandman commits his seed to the ground, with a presumption that the earth retains all those powers which promote vegetation. He concludes that the seasons will return in their stated order ; that the sun will warm and invigorate, where it shines, and showers cool and refresh, where they fall, as in ancient times. Certain established properties in matter, and certain established laws of motion, are presumed in the meanest mechanical operation, nay, in the least considerable actions of our lives.

Let us represent to ourselves such a system of things existing, as, in the opinion of an objector to the present, would justify our conceptions of a moral Supreme Being. Let us imagine every element and power of nature, in the minutest as well as the greatest instances, operating to the preservation and advantage of the good ; and, on the contrary, concurring to produce misery and destruction to the wicked. The good man inhabits a house with great security, whose walls decline near two feet from the perpendicular. He falls asleep with a lighted candle at the bed-side, and the flame it produces, though sufficient to consume the dwelling of the wicked, plays but as a lambent vapour on his curtains. He drinks a glass of aqua-fortis, by mistake, for the same quantity of champagne, and finds it only an innocent enlivener of his spirits. The heats of summer, and the frosts of winter, occasion the same agreeable sensations. Rich wines and poignant sauces attenuate his juices, and rectify the scorbutic habit of his body. The bad man, on the other hand, experiences very opposite effects. He sits frozen with cold over that fire which communicates warmth to

the rest of the company at the extremity of the room. At another time he scalds his fingers by dipping them into cold water. A basin of broth, or rice-milk, intoxicates his brain. He acquires the stone and a complication of distempers from a vegetable diet: and at last concludes a miserable being by passing under an arch of solid stone, which his own iniquities draw down upon his head.

Let us rest a moment to express our admiration of such a system, and then inquire how the bulk of mankind, neither perfect saints nor desperate sinners, but partaking generally of the qualities of both, shall regulate their conduct in conformity to it. From a confidence in their integrity, shall they inhabit houses that are nodding to their ruin; or from a distrust of their virtues, be afraid to venture themselves under the dome of St. Paul's? Shall they practise regularity and exercise, as wholesome rules of life; or, indulging themselves in indolence, swallow every day gallons of claret as the grand elixir? Shall they remain undetermined whether the centre of an ice-house, or the chimney corner, is the more comfortable situation in the Christmas holidays? And shall they retreat in the dog-days to cool shades and running streams; or, covering themselves with surtouts, hurry away to the sweating-rooms of bagnios?

To such inconvenient conclusions are the persons reduced, whose narrow views, and narrower prejudices, furnish them with complaints against the prevailing system; which is wisest and best, because fittest for mankind, to whose wants it is accommodated, and to whose faculties it is proportioned.

No. 133. THURSDAY, JULY 17, 1755.

THERE is nothing in this world that a man places so high a value upon, or that he parts with so reluctantly, as the idea of his own consequence. Amidst care, sickness, and misfortune ; amidst dangers, disappointments, and death itself, he holds fast this idea, and yields it up but with his last breath.

Happy indeed would it be, if virtue, wisdom, and superior abilities of doing good, were the basis of our consequence : but the misfortune is, we are generally apt to place it in those very qualities for which the thinking part of mankind either hate or despise us. The man of pleasure derives his consequence from the number of women he has ruined ; the man of honour, from the duels he has fought ; the country-squire, from the number of bottles he can drink ; the man of learning, by puzzling you with what you do not understand ; the ignorant man, by talking of what he does not understand himself ; my lady's woman, by dressing like a person of quality ; and my lady herself, by appearing in clothes unworthy of one of her house-maids.

Those who, in their own situations, are unfortunately of no consequence, are catching at every opportunity that offers itself to acquire it. Thus the blockhead of fortune flies from the company that would improve him, to be a man of consequence among the vulgar : while the independent citizen gives up the ease and enjoyment which he would find in the company and conversation of his equals, to be mortified by the pride and arrogance of his superiors at the other end of the town, in order to be a man of consequence at his return.

I remember an anabaptist tailor in the city, who, to make himself a man of consequence, used to boast to his customers, that however silent history had been upon a certain affair, he could affirm upon his credit, that the man in the mask who cut off King Charles's head was his own grandfather. I knew also a shoe-boy at Cambridge, when I was a student at St. John's, who was afterwards transported for picking pockets, but who having at his return commenced gamester, and of course made himself company for gentlemen, used always to preface what he had to say with, 'I remember when I was *abroad*, or when I was at *college*.' But even a more ridiculous instance than this, is in an old gentlewoman who has lately taken a garret at my barber's; this lady (whose father, it seems, was a justice of the quorum) constantly sits three whole hours every evening over a halfpenny roll and a farthing's worth of cheese, because it was the custom of her family, she says, to dine late, and sit a long while. This kind of consequence was very happily ridiculed by Tom Slaughter the butcher, at Newmarket. Every body knows that Tom's father was a gentleman who ran through a very good estate by cocking and horse-racing. Tom being asked, last meeting, by one who had known him in his prosperity, how he could descend to so low a calling as that of a butcher, answered, 'why, you know, sir, our family always took a pride in killing their own mutton.'

That this affectation of consequence is the most ridiculous of all vanities, every body will allow. But where men of real worth in all other respects are possessed of it, or where persons in great and honourable stations render themselves and their employments contemptible by such affectation, it is then seriously to be lamented.

Our ancestors derived their consequence from their

independency; and supported it by their integrity and hospitality. They resided upon their several estates, and kept open houses for their neighbours and tenants. They exerted themselves in deeds of hardiness and activity; and their wives and daughters were modest and good housewives.

There is an epitaph in Peck's collection of curious historical pieces, which (as that book is but in a few hands, and as I do not remember to have seen it in any other collection) I shall here transcribe, that our gentry of the present times may be instructed in the art of making themselves persons of real consequence. This epitaph (which for its natural beauty and simplicity is equal to any thing of the kind) was written in Queen Elizabeth's time, upon that noble and famous knight, Sir Thomas Scot, of Scot's-hall, in the county of Kent, who died on the 30th day of December 1594, and was buried in Bradborn church. His mother was the daughter of Sir William Kempe. He served in many parliaments as knight of the shire for that county. In the memorable year 1588, upon the council's sending him a letter on the Wednesday, acquainting him with the approach of the Spanish Armada, he sent four thousand armed men to Dover on the Thursday. The inhabitants of Ashford would have paid the charges of his funeral, on condition that his corpse might have been buried in their church.

EPITAPH.

I.

Here lies Sir Thomas Scot by name;
Oh hapie Kempe that bore him!
Sir Raynold, with four knights of fame,
Lyv'd lyneally before him.

II.

His wiefes were Baker, Heyman, Beere ;
His love to them unfayned.
He lyved nyne and fifty yeare ;
And seventeen sowles he gayned.

III.

His first wief bore them everie one :
The world might not have myst her !
She was a verie paragon,
The ladie Buckerst's syster.

IV.

His widow lyves in sober sort ;
No matron more discreter.
She still reteiynes a good reporte,
And is a great howsekeper.

V.

He (being call'd to special place)
Did what might best behove him.
The Queene of England gave him grace ;
The King of Heaven did love him.

VI.

His men and tenants wail'd the daye,
His kinn and cuntrie cried !
Both young and old in Kent may saye,
Woe woorth the daye he died.

VII.

He made his porter shut his gates
To sycophants and briebers ;
And ope them wide to great estates,
And alsoe to his neighbors.

VIII.

His hous was rightlye termed hall,
Whose bred and beef was redie.
It was a verie hospitall,
And refuge for the needie.

IX.

From whence he never stept aside,
In winter nor in sommer,
In Christmas time he did provide
Good cheer for everie comer.

X.

When any servis should be down,
He lyeked not to lyngar ;
The rich would ride, the poor would runn
If he held up his fingar.

XI.

He kept tall men, he rydd great hors ;
He did indite most finelye ;
He used few words, but cold discours
Both wisely and dyvinelye.

XII.

His lyving meane, his chargies greate,
His daughters well bestowed ;
Although that he were left in debt,
In fine he nothing owed ;

XIII.

But died in rich and hapie state,
Belov'd of man and woman ;
And (which is yeat much more than that)
He was envy'd of no man.

XIV.

In justice he did much excell,
In law he never wrangled ;
He loov'd rellygion wondrous well,
But he was not new fangled.

XV.

Let Romney marsh, and Dover say ;
Ask Norborn camp at leysuer,
If he were woont to make delaye,
To do his cuntrie pleasure.

XVI.

But Ashford's proffer passeth all,
 It was both rare and gentle ;
 They wold have pay'd his funerall,
 T' have tomb' him in their temple.

XVII.

Ambition he did not regard,
 No boaster, nor no bragger ;
 He spent, and lookt for no reward,
 He cold not play the bagger.

No. 134. THURSDAY, JULY 24, 1755.

IN a former paper I attempted to prove that the laws must be general, not particular, which God employs in the government of mankind. Let us now examine a little particularly the nature of the complaints which these laws occasion, and consider how far the existence of a Providence is rendered precarious by them.

We lament that happiness and misery are very irregularly distributed among the good and bad ; and yet, as it has been well observed, are by no means determined in questions, very necessary to be precisely settled, before we form this conclusion : as, what is the final and proper happiness of man ? And who are the good, and who are the bad, that deserve to partake of it, or to be excluded from it ? He is not a good man at Rome, who is a good man at London. Nay, in the same country, this sect adores him as a saint, whom another proclaims a minister of darkness. The patriot of one party is the rebel of the opposite one. The happiness then or misery of such a person becomes very frequently,

at the same time, and in the very same place, both an argument for the belief and rejection of a Providence.

Again, the greatest part of the misfortunes which afflict us are concluded to arise from the action of general laws: when, in reality, they proceed from our own wilful opposition to them, and refusal to accept them as the measure of our conduct. Obscure and limited as human reason is, it is sufficient to discover to us certain desirable ends, and certain means fitted to produce them: ends not to be procured by the application of different means, and means not adapted to procure different ends. Physical causes produce physical, and moral causes moral effects. It is surely unreasonable to invert this order, and expect moral effects from physical causes, and physical effects from moral causes. It is unreasonable to expect that the virtues of a saint or martyr will secure us from the dangers of a well or precipice, if we advance to them with a bandage over our eyes. We should smile at the country gentleman's simplicity, who disbelieved a Providence, because fox-hunting, port, and tobacco, were incapable of inspiring him with the genius of Milton, or because he was unfurnished with the sagacity and penetration of Locke, after a dozen years attendance to every debate at the quarter sessions. The epicure would be entitled to as little serious treatment, who embraced the same atheistical tenet, because his streams did not flow with burgundy and champagne, or because haunches of venison, turtles, and turbot, did not rise as spontaneously from his hot-beds as mushroom. We should treat such characters with ridicule; but are others less ridiculous, who expect effects as disproportionate to their causes, as those just described? Should the wise and good complain that they are not rich and robust like particular wicked

men ; the reply is obvious : the means that procure wisdom and virtue are very different from those that procure health and riches. Do they lament that they are not in possession of those external advantages, when they have neglected the natural methods of acquiring them. which persons less valuable have pursued with success ? It is no objection against a Providence, that men do not gather grapes from thorns, or figs from thistles ; they have reason to be satisfied while it is in their power to receive them from the plants proper to their production.

Let it be allowed that on some occasions, with all our precaution, the order of nature may operate to our disadvantage : the torrent may overwhelm, the flame consume, or the earthquake swallow us : but are general laws to be condemned, because in particular instances they give us transient pain, or even determine our present state of being, which they have contributed to preserve in every period of it, and on which not only our happiness, but our very existence has depended ? It is a necessary condition of a compound substance, like the material part of man, to be subject to dissolution, from causes exterior to it, or united with its constitution. Does a more convincing argument arise against a Providence from its dissolution at one season rather than another ? or from its dissolution by an external, rather than an internal cause, which is as effectual to the end, though less precipitate in the means ?

Some few cases (much fewer than are generally imagined) may possibly be stated, where, in the present life, the moment of misery to a faultless creature may exceedingly overbalance the moment of its happiness ; as when it is introduced into being with infirmities of body, too obstinate for temperance and discipline to correct, and which render it insensible to every enjoyment. But to solve these appearances,

a well supported revelation, that instructs us in the doctrine of a future state, may fitly be applied: for though revelation cannot serve as a basis to natural religion, on which it is only a superstructure, yet it may be extremely useful to reconcile the seeming inconsistencies of a system discovered to be good by arguments of another kind; and reason will acquiesce in the truth it teaches, as agreeable to its own dictates.

After premising these reflections, I may venture to make public the following letter from a very learned female correspondent:

MR. FITZ-ADAM,

It has been some surprise to me, that in a paper which seems designed to correct our judgments, and reduce the influence of fashion, folly, prejudice, and passion, you have never confuted a principle, which is a composition of them all; I mean the belief of a Providence. It answers indeed no individual purpose, except to countenance the insolence of our parsons, who maintain it in defiance of the wisdom of their superiors. I was early initiated in that *first philosophy*, which explained the creation by a fortuitous concourse of atoms. An infinite number of parcels, varied in shape, size, and colour, and embracing each other in all possible positions, opened a scene as entertaining to my fancy as it was intelligible to my understanding. My brother was an able advocate for this opinion; and his situation in a gaol, under the pressure of ill health, loss of fortune, reputation, and friends, furnished him with copious arguments to support it. A maiden aunt, indeed, who had the management of my education, was perpetually representing his principles as impious, and his arguments for them as absurd. She insisted that his misfortunes could be ascribed to no other cause than himself: that loss of reputation and friends was the

natural consequence of a want of common honesty; loss of fortune, of extravagance; and loss of health, of debauchery. I am ashamed to confess that these childish reasons had too much weight with me, and that I continued too long in a fluctuating state between truth and error. I thank God, however, that my own misfortunes have taken off the partial bias from my mind, and opened it to conviction and the reason of things. My beauty impaired, if not lost, by the small-pox, the death of a favourite child, the scantiness of my circumstances, and the brutality of my husband, have proved, beyond exception, that no moral Being presides over us. I shall not trouble you with a repetition of the same nonsense employed against me, as before against my brother, by the same ancient lady. She concluded with observing, that complaints of circumstances and the brutality of a husband came with an indifferent grace from a person, who, after rejecting so many advantageous offers, escaped from a window with a stranger she had scarcely seen. You will do me the justice to believe, that my judgment on this occasion was regulated more by my own feelings than the eloquence of my aunt. My satisfaction is, that the good lady, insensibly to herself, seems now becoming a convert to those opinions, which half her life has been employed to confute. Some late circumstances have indeed staggered her orthodoxy. She has made a new discovery, that she is considerably turned of seventy, and feels the infirmities which accompany that season making hasty advances to her. Her father confessor, and ancient admirer, the vicar of the parish, broke his leg not long since, and received other contusions not yet made public, by a fall from a vicious horse; and a lady in the neighbourhood, whom she has never forgiven the insult of disputing formerly the precedence at

church, is placed in a rank very superior to her own, by the accession of her husband to an estate and title, to which he has been presumptive heir for above these twenty years.

I am, &c.

No. 135. THURSDAY, JULY 31, 1755.

TO MR. FITZ-ADAM.

SIR,

THERE are few things which contribute more to mislead our judgments, and pervert our morals, than the confusion of our ideas arising from the abuse of words. Hence it hourly happens that virtues and vices are so blended and disguised, by taking each other's names, that almost the worst actions a man can be guilty of shall be attributed to an elevated and laudable spirit. Thus the most extravagant fellow living, who, to keep up an ostentatious figure by all kinds of expense, sets his country and conscience to sale, shall be extolled by all about him as a noble generous soul, above the low consideration of dirty money. The high-mettled blood, who debauches his friend's wife or daughter; who withholds a tradesman's just debt, that he may be punctual with a sharper; in short, who dares do any injury, and run the man through the body who shall resent it, calls himself, and is called by the world, a man of gallantry and honour. Economy is put out of countenance by the odious word avarice; and the most rapacious covetousness takes shelter under the terms prudence and discretion. An easy thoughtlessness of

temper, which betrays the owner to recommend a scoundrel; to lend to or be bound for a spendthrift; to conform with all the gallant schemes of a profligate; to heap favours on a pimp or sharper, even to the neglect of meritorious friends, and frequently to the distressing a wife and children; in fine, that easy disposition of mind which cannot resist importunity, be the solicitor ever so unworthy, is dignified with the most amiable of all epithets, good nature; and so the thing itself brought into disgrace by the misapplication of the word.

The bare mention of these abuses is sufficient to lead every thinking reader into a larger catalogue of the like kind. Hence it is that falsehood usurps the place of truth, and ignominy of merit; and though this may have been the complaint of all ages and nations of the civilized world, yet still the cheaters and the cheated are as numerous as ever.

I have been led into these reflections by the superficial and mistaken opinions which are almost universally received of two gentlemen in a neighbouring county, at whose houses I have been lately entertained, and whose characters I shall here delineate, concealing their real names under the fictitious ones of Sombrinus and Hilarius.

Sombrinus is a younger brother of a noble family, whose intrinsic worth having been descried and valued by a man of solid sense in the neighbourhood, procured him the happiness of his only daughter in marriage, with a fortune of a thousand pounds per annum. Sombrinus is a man of extraordinary natural parts, cultivated by much reading and observation; of nice honour; sincere in his friendships, which are but few; and universally humane: a warm lover of his religion and country, and an excellent justice of the peace, in which capacity he takes infinite pains to allay bitterness, and compose quarrels. Pious him-

self, a regularity of devotion is kept up in his family. His numerous issue (to which he is rather essentially affectionate than fond) obliges him to economy, though his natural inclination is stronger towards dispensing riches than hoarding them. His equipage and table are rather neat and sufficient than sumptuous. Reasonable people are always welcome to him; but the riotous find their account neither in his temperance nor his conversation. With all these good qualities, his too great avidity for book-knowledge, his penetration into men and manners, and his exalted notions of reason and rectitude, combining with a sickly habit of body, render him apt to be splenetic or silent, upon occasions wherein his delicacy is grossly offended. Hence the much-injured Sombrinus lies under the calumny of being a very ill-natured man, among all those who have but a slight acquaintance of him; while even his intimates, who see him at all hours, and in every mood, though convinced of the goodness of his heart, and the purity of his intentions, are yet obliged, when contending in his favour, to grant that he has often the appearance of an ill-humoured man.

Hilarius is a downright country gentleman; a *bon vivant*; an indefatigable sportsman. He can drink his gallon at a sitting, and will tell you he was never sick nor sorry in his life. He married a most disagreeable woman with a vast fortune, whom however he contents himself with slighting, merely because he cannot take the trouble of using her ill. For the same reason he is seldom seen to be angry, unless his favourite horse should happen to be lamed, or the game-act infringed. Having an estate of above five thousand a year, his strong beer, ale, and wine-cellar are always well stored; to either to which, as also to his table, abounding in plenty of good victuals ill sorted and ill dressed, every voter and fox-hunter claims a

kind of right. He roars for the church, which he never visits, and is eternally cracking his coarse jests, and talking smut to the parsons; whom if he can make fuddled, and expose to contempt, it is the highest pleasure he can enjoy. As for his lay friends, nothing is more frequent with him than to set them and their servants dead drunk upon their horses, to whose sagacity it is left to find the way home in a dark winter's night; and should any of them happen to be found half smothered in a ditch next morning, it affords him excellent diversion for a twelve-month after. His sons are loobies, and his daughters hoydens: not that he is covetous, but careless in their educations. Through the same indolence, his bastards, of which he has not a few, are left to a parish; and his men and maid servants run riot without control for want of discipline in the family. He has a mortal aversion to any interruption in his mirth. Tell him of a calamity that has befallen any of his acquaintance, he asks where stands the bottle? Propose to him the assisting at a quarter-sessions, he is engaged at a cock-match; or should he, through curiosity, make his appearance there, ever jovial and facetious, and equally free from the disturbance of passion and compassion, he will crack his joke from the bench with the vagrant whom he sentences to be whipped through the county, or with the felon whom he condemns to the gallows. Such is his condescension, that he makes no scruple to take his pipe and pot at an alehouse with the very dregs of the people. As for the parliament (though his seat in it cost him very dear in house-keeping) if the fate of the nation depended upon his attendance there, he would not be prevailed upon to quit the country in the shooting or hunting season, unless forced up by a call of the house. In fine, it is an invariable maxim with him, let what will happen, never to give himself one moment's concern. Are you in health and prosperity? No one

is readier to club a laugh with you ; but he has no ear to the voice of distress or complaint. The business of his life is (what he calls) pleasure ; to promote this, he annually consumes his large income, which, without any design of his, may happen indeed to do some good,

And wander, Heav'n directed, to the poor.

With these endowments, there are at least nine in ten who give the preference to Hilarius, and lavish on him the epithets of the worthiest, the noblest, and the best natured creature alive ; while Sombrinus is ridiculed as a *deadly* wise man, a milksop, stingy, proud, sullen, and ill-natured. Yet Sombrinus is the man to whom every one flies, whenever there is a demand for justice, good sense, wholesome counsel, or real charity : to Hilarius, when the belly only is to be consulted, or the time dissipated.

Thus are the thousand good qualities of Sombrinus eclipsed by a too reserved and serious turn of mind ; while Hilarius, on the false credit of generosity and good-humour, without one single virtue in his composition, swims triumphantly with the stream of applause, and is esteemed by every one of his acquaintance for having only the abilities of a complete voluptuary.

I cannot dismiss this letter without lamenting the mistaken opinions usually received of characters like these, as a woful instance of the depravity of our hearts as well as heads. A man may with equal propriety aver, that the giant who showed himself for a shilling last winter at Charing-cross was in every respect a much greater man than Mr. Pope, who had the misfortune of being low, crooked, and afflicted with the head-ache.

I am, sir,

Your constant reader,
And most humble servant,

W. M.

No. 136. THURSDAY, AUGUST 7, 1755.

TO MR. FITZ-ADAM.

SIR,

As it is incumbent on an historian, who writes the history of his own times, to take notice of public and remarkable events, so I apprehend it to be the business of a writer of essays for entertainment and instruction to mark the passions as they rise, and to treat of those especially which appear to influence the manners of the age he lives in.

The love of noise, though a passion observable in all times and countries, has yet been so predominant of late years, and given rise to so many of our modern customs, that I cannot think it unworthy of one of your speculations.

In many instances this passion is subordinate to, and proceeds from, another, which is no less universal, and no less commendable ; I mean the love of fame. Noise, or sound in general, has been considered as a means whereby thousands have rendered themselves famous in their generation ; and this is the reason why to be famous, and to make a noise in the world, are commonly understood as equivalent expressions. Hence also the trumpet, because one of the most noble instruments of sound, was anciently made sacred to the heathen goddess of fame : so that even at this day, when the world is too backward in doing justice to a man's merit, and he is constrained to do it himself, he is very properly said to sound his own praises, or trumpet out his fame.

The great utility and advantages which may be obtained from noise, in several other respects, are very apparent. In the pulpit, the preacher who declaims in the loudest manner is sure to gain the greatest number of followers. He has also the satisfaction of knowing that the devotion of a great part of his audience depends more upon the soundness of his lungs than the soundness of his doctrine.

At the bar, every one knows the great influence of sound: and indeed where people accustom themselves to talk much and mean little, it behoves them to substitute noise in the place of eloquence. It is also a very just remark, that scurrility and abuse require an elevation of the voice.

In the senate it is often seen, that the noise and thunder with which the patriot shakes the house has redounded more to the good of his country than all the knowledge of the history and laws of it, locked up in the breasts of profound politicians, who have wanted voices to make themselves heard.

From a conviction that noise in general can be made subservient to so many good purposes, we may easily imagine that a great fondness must be often shown for it, even where its usefulness, or tendency, is not immediately discernible: for, from the very force of habit, the means will often be pursued, where the end is not perhaps attainable.

At a coffee-house which I frequent at the St. James's end of the town, I meet with two sets of young men, commonly distinguished by the name of Beaux and Bloods; who are perpetually interrupting the conversation of the company, either with whistling of tunes, lisping of new-fashioned oaths, trolling out affected speeches and short sentences; or else with recitals of bold adventures past, and much bolder which they are about to en-

gage in. But as noise is more becoming a Blood than a Beau, I am generally diverted with the one, and always tired with the other.

This has led me to reflect on the wisdom which has been shown in the institution of certain clubs and nocturnal meetings for men, into which no persons can be admitted as members but those who are disposed to make that particular noise only, which is agreeable to the tastes and talents of their respective societies. Thus the members of one club vent their noise in politics; those of another in critical dissertations on eating and drinking; a third perhaps in story-telling; and a fourth in a constant rotation of merry songs. In most of these clubs there are presidents chosen and invested with authority to be as noisy as they please themselves, and to inflict penalties on all those who open out of time.

The ladies indeed are somewhat more limited in their topics for noise, though their meetings for venting it are more numerous than those of the men. They also lie under the disadvantage of having voices of a tone too soft and delicate to be heard at a great distance: but they seem in some measure to have obviated these disadvantages, by agreeing to talk all together: by which means, and as the subject is generally of the vituperative kind, they are able to cope with the men, even at the most vociferous of their clubs.

Again; those diversions, in which noise most abounds, have been always held in the highest esteem. The true and original country squire, who is actuated by this generous passion for noise, prefers the diversion of hunting to all other enjoyments upon earth. He can entertain his companions for hours together with talking of his hounds, and extolling the divine music and harmony of their

tongues; and scarce ever goes to bed without winding the horn, and having the full cry in his parlour. Horse-racing, cock-fighting, bull-baiting, and the like, are sports which fill the hearts of the common people with the most extravagant delight; while their voices are employed in the loudest shouts and exclamations. In the opinion of our English sailors, no entertainment can be complete where the all-cheering huzza is wanting: by the force of which they are inspired with such courage and resolution, that even fighting itself becomes their diversion.

In London, where many of these sports cannot be enjoyed, the fashion for noise has appeared in various other shapes. It has, within the memory of most men, given rise to routs, drums, and hurricanes; which in all probability would have been improved into cannonades, thunders, and earthquakes, before this time, had it not been for the late panics on account of some concussions in the air, very much resembling those of a real earthquake. However, as a proof that the names already given to those polite assemblies are extremely proper for them, I need only to remark that they are usually composed of what is called the best company, who from time immemorial have pleaded the privilege of birth for talking as loud as they can.

Among the many other instances of the effects of this passion in high life, I shall only take notice of one more; which is an ingenious method (unknown to our forefathers) of making a thundering noise at people's doors; by which you are generally given to understand that some person of consequence does you the honour to suppose you are in the land of the living.

Some may think that it will bear a dispute, whether such a violent hammering at people's doors may not be looked upon in the eye of the law as an

attempt of a *forcible entry* : but it is my humble opinion, that it can only be construed to an action of *assault and battery* ; since it may be proved that the generality of those who are guilty of this misdemeanor have really no intention of making any entry at all ; for when doors are opened to them, they secure their retreat as fast as they can ; flying from the face of those whom they count their enemies when at home, and visit as their friends when abroad.

I have now by me a certain curious book of memoirs, wherein the sentiments of a wealthy old lady in the city, with regard to the usefulness of noise, seem very nearly to correspond with the observations I have here made upon that subject. I shall transcribe a short passage from the character of this lady, and conclude my letter.

‘ Towards the decline of her days she took lodgings on Ludgate-hill, in order to be amused with the noises in the street, and to be constantly supplied with objects of contemplation : for she thought it of great use to a mind that had a turn for meditation, to observe what was passing in the world. As she had also a very religious disposition, she used often to say it was a grievous shame that such a thing as silent meetings, among some of the dissenting brethren, should be suffered in a christian country. And when she died she left five hundred pounds towards the erecting fifty new *sounding-boards*, to aid the lungs of the aged clergy, in divers churches with in the bills of mortality.’

I am, sir,

Your obliged humble servant,

R. L.

No. 137. THURSDAY, AUGUST 14, 1755.

MY correspondent of to-day will, I hope, excuse me for not publishing his letter sooner. 'To confess the truth, I had some thoughts of making an apology to him for not publishing it at all ; having conceived an opinion that it might tend to lessen those exalted ideas which the world has always entertained of us men of learning. But though upon reconsideration I have changed my mind, I must take the liberty of observing, by way of introduction, that as I modestly presume no man living has more learning than myself, so no man values himself more upon it, or has a greater veneration for all those who possess it, even though they should possess nothing else. I remember to have seen it under my grandmother's own hand, in the new primer she gave me at my first going to school, that 'learning is better than house and land;' and though I cannot say that I have ever been in a situation to make the proper comparison between *learning* and *house* and *land*; yet my grandmother was a wise woman, and I had never reason to call in question the truth of any of her sayings.

TO MR. FITZ-ADAM.

SIR,

It is with pleasure I observe, that you commonly avoid the ridiculous ostentation of prefixing a scrap of antiquity to your lucubrations. Your practice confirms me in my opinion, that a line or two of Greek and Latin is neither useful nor ornamental to a paper intended for the benefit of all sorts of readers.

It was excusable in your predecessors, the Tatler, Spectator, and Guardian; for in their time we had fine gentlemen, one out of twenty of whom could, perhaps, make a shift to pick out the meaning of a Latin couplet. But now-a-days the case is altered; it is pedantry to know any other language, or at least to seem to know any, but the fashionable modern ones. For my own part, I by no means approve of mottos, which I doubt not are often thought of after the piece is written; and if not, must confine the writer too closely to the sense of them. The same objection I have to numerous quotations from the ancients; for why should we speak in a less intelligible language, what may be as pertinently and justly expressed in our own? It is with reason then, that in our days a man is no more reputed a scholar for quoting Homer and Virgil, than he would be esteemed a man of morals for reading Tully and Seneca; and a Greek motto is thought as unnecessary to a good essay, as a head of Otho or Galba would be to a learned man, if it was slung round his shoulders. Indeed, to speak my mind, if the use of a language is to arrive at the sense, wit, and arts conveyed by it, I see no reason why our own should yield to any other, ancient or modern. It is copious and manly, though not regular; and has books in every branch of the arts and sciences, written with a spirit and judgment not to be exceeded. Notwithstanding which, a man versed in Greek and Latin, and nothing else, shall be called learned; while another, less knowing in these, who has imbibed the sense, spirit, and knowledge of all the best authors in our own language, is denied that honourable title.

I own to you, Mr. Fitz-Adam, that he who would lay in a store of prudent and judicious maxims for the direction of his conduct in life can do it nowhere more effectually than from the invaluable

works of antiquity. But is it absolutely necessary that he should do this from the very languages in which they were written? I am myself what is called a good Greek and Latin scholar; and yet I believe I might be master of as much true knowledge, if I understood neither. There are many good reasons to be given why the study of these languages ought to be cultivated: but I think this pursuit may be carried too far; and that much of the time spent in acquiring a critical knowledge of them might be employed to more advantage. I speak in general; for there are some, who have a genius particularly suited to the study of words, that would never make any figure in the study of things.

There is hardly any thing truly valuable in the dead languages that may not be read with equal advantage and satisfaction in the living, and more particularly in our own; for if I may rely upon my own judgment and the report of learned men, many of the best ancient authors have lost little by their translation into our soil. I am charmed with the Greek of Thucydides and Longinus; but I am likewise delighted with the French dress of the last, and Mr. Smith's English of both. I can distinguish the gentility and ease of Cicero, and the spirit and neatness of Pliny, in their epistles, as they are translated by Mr. Melmoth. Will any man that has seen Mr. Pope's Homer lament that he has not read him in the original? And will not every man of a true taste admire the gaiety and good sense of Horace, the gallantry and genteel carelessness of Ovid, the fire and energy of Juvenal, and the passion of Tibullus, in the paraphrases and translations of Donne, Dryden, Garth, Congreve, and Hammond? I instance these, as their beauties are with more difficulty transferred into a foreign language.

It would be endless to enumerate the English

poems that perhaps equal any thing in Greek or Latin. The *Paradise Lost* will be thought little inferior to the *Iliad* or *Æneid* in judgment, majesty, and true poetic fire. The *Essay on Criticism* I need not scruple to compare with the *Epistle to the Pisos*; nor to prefer the *Dunciad*, *Essay on Man*, and the *Ethic epistles*, to any of the productions of antiquity. And will you not join with me in preferring *Alexander's Feast* to all the extravagance of *Pindar*, in point of harmony, and power of expression and numbers? The poets, it is true, had different views; but notwithstanding, there may be a comparison.

To enlarge farther would carry me beyond the limits I promise to myself; I shall therefore conclude my remarks on this kind of writing with observing, that if we fall short of the ancients in any part of polite writing, it is in the method of dialogue, in which some of them, as *Xenophon*, *Plato*, and *Tully*, had most excellent talents: and yet I know not whether the dialogue on *Medals*, and the *Minute Philosopher*, may not rival any thing they have left behind them: for as to their political writings, no man will think them equal to the *Letters on Patriotism*, and the *Idea of a Patriot King*. In history we are certainly deficient, though *Raleigh*, *Clarendon*, and a few others, are excellent in their kinds; but we as certainly make it up in mathematics, natural philosophy, physick, and the many excellent treatises we have on morality, politics, and civil prudence.

It is not my intention to resume a subject that has already employed much abler pens, and to raise a dispute about the comparative merits of the ancients and moderns; nor would I by any means discourage the study of the ancient languages; for I think the time I spent in acquiring them extremely well employed: but I would willingly persuade such as are

not masters of them, that they may become scholars and learned men with no other assistance than their own native English. I am sure I think the man more deserving of those names who is conversant with Bacon, Boyle, Locke, and Newton, than he who is unacquainted with these great philosophers, though he should have read Plato, Aristotle, and all the orators and poets of antiquity.

You will now, no doubt, be curious to know who I am, that decide so magisterially in a point so long given up, and of so much consequence to the republic of letters. Time, Mr. Fitz-Adam, may bring that to light: at present it is necessary I should screen myself from the indignation of pedants, who would overwhelm me with heaps of ancient rubbish. My view in this letter is to convince the ladies, that many of them possess more real learning than a fellow of a college, who has for twenty years pored upon remnants. I have indeed often wondered that the author of the World has not been favoured with a much greater share of the productions of female correspondents than any of his predecessors, as he has set at naught Greek and Latin for their sakes. But perhaps it may be for that very reason: for so capricious are the sex, that though they hate a pedant, they despise the man who is not *homo multarum literarum*. I have heard a lady declare, that she could no more love a man whose learning was not superior to her own, than him who took all occasions of showing her that it was. If you approve of me as a correspondent, I may be sometimes at your service; in which case, to show my learning, my style shall now and then be enriched with a little Greek and Latin.

I am, sir,

Your most humble servant,

A. C.

No. 138. THURSDAY, AUGUST 21, 1755.

For several weeks past, I have been considering with myself how I might extend the use and entertainment of these my labours: for though thousands of my countrymen have experienced and are ready to attest their salutary effects, yet it cannot be denied but there are still people to be met with, who are by no means as wise and as good as they ought to be. General satire, as I have formerly observed, is what few people care to apply to themselves; and though I have hitherto been averse to particular and personal abuse, I am at last willing to try its effect, well knowing, that if the good which may accrue from it be but in the proportion of one in a million to the entertainment it gives, I shall have reason to bless myself for thus quarrelling with the world. I am sensible also that by adopting this method I am increasing the number of my correspondents, as every one will be for trying his hand on so delightful a subject as the failings of his friends; especially when I shall have given him my honour that he need be under no apprehensions for his safety, and that I will take every quarrel upon myself. I therefore hereby invite all persons whatsoever to transmit to me forthwith all the scandal they can either collect or invent. Names, and particularly great ones, will be very acceptable; or in default of such names, minute descriptions of persons, their alliances and connexions, or the streets they live in, will be equally agreeable. Great regard will be paid to the letters of female correspondents; but it is humbly hoped that they will not suffer the copiousness and enticement of the sub-

ject to hurry them into lengths that may exceed the bounds of this paper.

I am sensible that a great deal of courage, and an equal degree of dexterity at single rapier, will be necessary on this occasion ; but as I said before, I am contented to take the whole upon myself, rather than lay my correspondents under any restraint : my name is Adam Fitz-Adam ; I am to be heard of every morning at the Tilt-yard coffee-house, and, though an old man, shall be ready to give any gentleman satisfaction, who chooses to call upon me in a hackney-coach, and frank me to Hyde-park, or Montague-house.

To extend the usefulness of this paper still farther, it is my intention (notwithstanding any former declaration to the contrary) to mix politics with slander. I am in a manner compelled to make this second alteration in my plan, from a thorough conviction that no man in these kingdoms is such a master of politics as myself ; and as a war with France seems now to be inevitable, I shall from time to time instruct our ministers in what manner to conduct it, and shall hope for an exact compliance with every plan I shall lay before them. This will be saving a great deal of trouble and perplexity to the common people of England, who, though always ready to instruct an administration, are sometimes so divided in their opinions, that the said administration are forced to pursue their own measures for want of plain and punctual instructions from their friends.

The better to carry on this laudable design, I shall direct what bills are proper to be brought into parliament, and what acts I would have repealed. I shall also devote three mornings in every week to the private instruction of all such ministers and members of parliament as are desirous of conferring with me at my lodgings up two pair of stairs at the trunk-

maker's in St. Martin's-lane. I shall likewise be ready to answer all questions in politics to such gentlemen and ladies as would willingly investigate that science without study or application. This will tend greatly to the edification of all justices of the peace, nurses, midwives, country curates, and parish clerks, whose ideas seem at present to be a little confused, for want of a thorough knowledge of the interests and connexions of the several states of Europe, and how the balance of power is to be maintained. I shall keep a watchful eye over the king of France and his ministers, and will give timely notice of any intended invasions, and direct measures to defeat such invasions in proper time. I shall find means of instructing the other powers of Europe in their true and natural interests, and will communicate in this paper the intelligence I shall from time to time receive from the said powers; so that the public shall always be apprized beforehand of the measures they intend to take.

When I consider the vast utility of this my undertaking, I cannot be too thankful for the abilities I am blessed with for carrying it on to the universal satisfaction of all parties. My humanity is, I confess, a little hurt, by reflecting that while I am thus making a monopoly of politics and slander, I am doing an injury to those of my brother authors who have long lived by dealing out their occasional portions of those commodities. But I am comforted upon second thoughts, that as this paper is published once a week, they will have continued opportunities of enriching their own larger compositions with the most shining parts of it; and this they shall have free leave to do, provided that they add no conjectures of their own, or pretend to doubt the superiority of my abilities, whereby disputes may

be raised upon any of those facts which I shall think proper to advance. The same indulgence is hereby given to all writers or compilers of country newspapers in Great Britain and Ireland: for as I have only the good of my country at heart, I am desirous of extending these my labours to the remotest parts of his majesty's dominions. I shall also have this farther satisfaction, that the general complaint of the country's being deserted of inhabitants every winter may cease; as by means of this circulation every private gentleman may reside constantly at his seat, and every clergyman at his living, without being obliged once a year to pay a visit to London, in order to study politics, and instruct the administration.

But a much greater advantage than any yet mentioned remains still to be told. The circulation of this paper will not be confined to Great Britain and Ireland; it will doubtless be demanded in all the courts, cities, and large towns of Europe; by which means our enemies on the continent, finding the superiority of our wisdom, and knowing by whom our counsellors are counselled, will sue to us for peace upon our own terms. In the mean time, as we are entering into a war not of our own seeking, but merely in defence of our commerce, and for the protection and support of our undoubted rights, I shall direct the administration how to raise such supplies, as may enable us to carry it on with vigour and success; and this I hope to effect to every body's satisfaction, which, I humbly apprehend, has not always been the case.

I am well aware that there are certain superficial persons in the world, who may fancy that they have not discovered in my writings hitherto these marvellous abilities, to which I am now laying claim. To all such I shall only answer, let the event decide;

for I have always thought it beneath me to boast of talents superior to other men, till the necessity of the times compels me to produce them. Those who know me will say of me what modesty forbids I should say of myself: indeed it has been owing to a very uncommon degree of that sheepish quality, that I have not let my readers into many secrets of myself, that would have amazed and confounded them.

I have undertaken politics and slander at the same time, from a constant observation that there is a certain connexion between those sciences, which it is difficult to break through. But I intend to vary from the common method, and shall sometimes write politics without abuse, and abuse without politics. It may be feared, perhaps, that as I have hitherto received no reward for the great candour with which I have treated the administration during the course of this paper, I may incline to direct wrong measures out of pure spite; but I can assure my readers that such fears are groundless: I have nothing at heart but the public good, and shall propose no measures but such as are most apparently conducive to the honour and glory of my native country. In treating of these measures, I shall build nothing upon hypothesis, but will go mathematically to work, and reduce every thing to demonstration. For instance, if the war is only to be a naval one, I would instruct our minister (as a certain ingenious painter is said to draw) by the triangle. As thus: The end of the war is an advantageous peace. Now suppose any triangle, equilateral or otherwise, where A shall signify the English fleet, B the French fleet, and C the above peace; the solution then will be no more than this, let the fleet A take the fleet B, and you produce the peace C. The same solution will do in a land war,

where A and B may stand for armies instead of fleets.

Having now sufficiently explained myself upon this important occasion, I shall take leave of my readers till next Thursday, at which time, unless I should see reason to the contrary, I shall present them with a paper either of scandal or politics, which shall be to all their satisfactions.

No. 139. THURSDAY, AUGUST 28, 1755.

I HAVE judged it proper to postpone politics to another week, that I may oblige my readers with a piece of scandal, or whatever else they may please to call it, which has but just transpired, and which will quickly engage the conversation of all the best families in town and country. Those who are unacquainted with the parties concerned will I hope excuse me for publishing only the initial letters of their names, or sometimes no letters at all; their high rank, and the honourable offices they bear, demanding from me a little more complaisance than I may probably show to meaner persons. At the same time I should be sorry to have it thought, that my tenderness upon this occasion arose from any selfish considerations of the consequences that might ensue; the sword of a man of quality is no longer than that of another man, nor, for any thing I have observed, is he a jot more dexterous at drawing a trigger. My moderation proceeds from the great respect which is due from persons in humble situations to men of high and illustrious birth: though at the same time I must take the liberty of declaring, that one or two stories more of the same nature with what I am now

going to relate will entirely cancel my regards, and incline me to treat them with the freedom of an equal.

Every body knows, at least every body in genteel life, that the match between Lord *** and Miss G—— was brought about by the old earl, and the young lady's aunt; at whose house my lord unfortunately saw, and fell desperately in love with Miss L——, who was a distant relation of the aunt, and who happened to be there upon a visit, at the time of his lordship's courtship to the niece. The character of Miss L—— is too notorious to require a place in this narrative; though I must do her the justice to own, that I believe every art to undo a woman was practised upon her, before she was prevailed upon to give up her honour to a man, whom she knew to be the destined husband of her most intimate friend.

Those who knew of the affair between my Lord and Miss L—— endeavoured by every possible method to dissuade Miss G—— from the match; and indeed if that unfortunate young lady had not preferred a title to happiness, she had treated his lordship as he deserved, from a thorough conviction that he had already bestowed his affections upon Miss L——. But an union of hearts is by no means necessary in the marriages of the great. My lord and the old earl saw a thousand charms in Miss G——'s large fortune; and the young lady and her aunt saw every thing in a title that could be wished for in the married state. The ceremony was performed soon after at the earl's house; and the young couple, though perfectly indifferent to each other, conducted themselves so prudently in all companies, that those who did not know them intimately believed them to be very happy people.

The old earl dying soon after, my lord succeeded

to the estate and title of * * *, and lived with his lady in all the magnificence and splendor which his large income could afford. His lordship had a considerable mortgage on the estate of Sir O—— S——; and it was under pretence of settling some affairs with that gentleman, at his brother's seat near St. Alban's, that he set out the beginning of this month upon the expedition which has unhappily turned out so fatal to his peace. Colonel C * * *, a gentleman too well known for his gallantries among the ladies to need the initial letters of his name, was to be of his lordship's party; and though my lord had two sets of horses of his own, yet for certain reasons, which may hereafter be guessed at, he hired a coach and six at Tubbs's, and set out on the Tuesday for St. Alban's, with intention, as was given out, to return on the Thursday following.

I should have informed my readers, that Lady * * * and the young viscountess D——, who was said to have a *tendre* for the colonel, were to meet them in the viscountess's coach at Barnet, on their return home, and that they were all to dine together at the Green Man. It was said, I know, that Doctor * * *, who is a man of family, was of the lady's party: he had been an intimate acquaintance, and some say a lover of Miss G——, before her marriage with Lord * * *. The doctor is a man much more famous for his wit and address than his practice; and is thought to be the authour of a late extraordinary performance, which, however celebrated, in my humble opinion, reflects more honour on his invention than either on his knowledge in politics, or his character as a moral man. But I will avoid circumstances, and be as short as I can.

Doctor * * *, though he lives at St. James's end of the town, had been several times in that week at Batson's and Child's coffee-houses, and had drank

chocolate with Sir E—— H—— the very Thursday that Lord *** and the colonel were to return from St. Alban's to meet Lady *** and the viscountess at the Green Man at Barnet. Many people are of opinion, that the doctor was not of the party, but that he received his intelligence from one H—y, who had formerly been a steward of Lord ***. But H—y denies the fact, and lays the whole mischief on Lady ***'s woman, who it seems had been house-keeper to the doctor, when he lived in the square. There are strange reports of the doctor and this woman; but whether she or H—y was the contriver of this villany will appear hereafter. H—y is a man of a very indifferent character, and (I am not afraid of saying it) capable of undertaking any mischief whatsoever.

Lady *** and the viscountess, according to agreement, set out on Thursday at one o'clock for Barnet, and came to the Green Man, which was the place appointed for dining. My lord and the colonel not being arrived, the viscountess recollected that she had an acquaintance in the neighbourhood, at about two miles distance, whom she proposed visiting in a post-chaise, under pretence of saving her own horses. As this acquaintance of the viscountess was a stranger to Lady ***, her ladyship declined going with her friend, and agreed to amuse herself with a book of novels till her return, or till the arrival of my lord and the colonel, which was every moment expected. The viscountess stepped immediately into the post-chaise; and soon after, as Lady *** was looking out of the window of the inn, she saw a coach and six drive by very hastily towards London; and the landlord declares that he saw Lord ***, and the colonel, and two ladies in the coach, muffled up in cloaks. He also declares, that Lady *** called out three times for the coach to

stop, but that no one answered, and the coachman drove out of sight in a few minutes.

I should have taken notice before, that as soon as the viscountess was gone upon her visit, as Lady *** was sitting at the window next the road, the captain in quarters took great notice of her, and said to the chambermaid, in her ladyship's hearing, that he would give up a whole year's pay to pass the afternoon with so fine a creature: upon which Lady *** frowned upon him very severely, and began a smart conversation with him on his boldness and presumption.

The viscountess, to the great surprise of Lady ***, did not return till near six in the evening, and seemed in great confusion while she endeavoured to apologize for her absence. But as Lady *** was convinced that her lord was in the coach that drove so hastily towards London, she declared positively that she would not stir a step from the inn till he returned to fetch her; and insisted on the viscountess's going immediately to inform him of her resolution. The viscountess accordingly set out; and the captain was seen going up stairs soon after. But whether Lord *** returned that night, or whether it was really his lordship's coach that passed by, is uncertain: however, Lady *** has been missing ever since; and yesterday a lady was found drowned in Rosamond's pond, who is suspected to be her: for though Lady *** was a thin woman, and wore a chintz gown that day, and the person taken out of the pond appeared to be fat, and was dressed in white; yet it is thought that by lying a long time under water the body may be very much swelled, and the colours of the linen entirely discharged. One thing is certain, that Lord *** is like a man distracted; the doctor, the steward, and my lady's woman, are taken into custody; and the colonel

and the viscountess are fled nobody knows whither.

I shall leave my readers to make their own comments on this unhappy affair ; which I have brought into as short a compass as I was able, with truth and perspicuity. I am sensible that where names occur so often, and those only marked with asterisks or initial letters, it is a very difficult matter to avoid confusion : and indeed I should hardly have thought myself perfectly clear, if I had not communicated my narrative to a country acquaintance of mine, a man totally ignorant of the whole affair, who was pleased to assure me, that he never met with any thing so plain and intelligible. I have been the more circumstantial upon this occasion, from a desire of pointing out in the most perspicuous manner the leading steps of this fatal catastrophe : for I am not satisfied with entertaining my readers with the frailties and misfortunes of persons of quality, unless I can warn them by their example against falling into the like errors.

No. 140. THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 4, 1755.

THE report of the King of France's having lately forbidden the coffee-houses at Paris to take in any English newspapers was no more than I expected, after having, in the World of last Thursday was se'nnight, so plainly and openly declared my intentions of making all men politicians. But though his most christian majesty has thought proper to keep his subjects in the dark as to the science of politics, yet I hear with pleasure that his emissaries

in this city are buying up large numbers of these my lucubrations, for the private perusal of that monarch and his ministers, and that a council is ordered to attend the reading of them as soon as they arrive. But for very good reasons I have thought proper to change my attentions, and not meddle with matters of state; at least for the present. Indeed, to confess the truth, I have lately received full conviction that, great as my knowledge is in politics, there are those at the head of affairs that know to the full as much as myself. Success is not always in our power; but if we are really to enter into a war with France, I have the pleasure of assuring the common people of England, that they may depend upon its being as well conducted as if they had the entire management of it in their own hands, or even if I myself was to preside at all their meetings for settling plans and operations.

This and other reasons have inclined me for the present to lay aside politics, and to go on in the old way, mending hearts instead of heads, or furnishing such amusements as may fix the attention of the idle, or divert the schemes of the vicious, for at least five minutes every week. Of this kind is the following little piece, which I received some time since from a very ingenious correspondent, who entitles it

A MEDITATION AMONG THE BOOKS.

From every thing in nature a wise man may derive matter of meditation. In meditations various authors have exercised their genius or tortured their fancy. An author who meant to be serious has meditated on the *mystery of weaving*: an author who never meant to be serious has meditated on a *broomstick*: let me also meditate; and a *library of books* shall be the subject of my meditations.

Before my eyes an almost innumerable multitude of authors are ranged; different in their opinions, as

in their bulk and appearance : in what light shall I view this great assembly ? Shall I consider it as an ancient legion, drawn out in goodly array under fit commanders ? or as a modern regiment of writers, where the common men have been forced by want, or seduced through wickedness into the service, and where the leaders owe their advancement rather to caprice, party-favour, and the partiality of friends, than to merit or service ?

Shall I consider ye, O ye books ! as a herd of courtiers or strumpets, who profess to be subservient to my use, and yet seek only your own advantage ? No ; let me consider this room as the great charnel-house of human reason, where darkness and corruption dwell ; or, as a certain poet expresses himself,

Where hot and cold, and wet and dry,
And beef, and broth, and apple-pie,
Most slovenly assemble.

Who are they, whose unadorned raiment bespeaks their inward simplicity ? They are *law books, statutes, and commentaries on statutes*. These are *acts of parliament*, whom all men must obey, and yet few only can purchase. Like the sphinx of antiquity, they speak in enigmas, and yet devour the unhappy wretches who comprehend them not.

These are *commentaries on statutes* ; for the perusing of them, the longest life of man would prove insufficient ; for the understanding of them, the utmost ingenuity of man would not avail.

Cruel is the dilemma between the necessity and the impossibility of understanding ; yet are we not left utterly destitute of relief. Behold, for our comfort, *an abridgment of law and equity* ! It consists not of many volumes ; it extends only to twenty-two folios ; yet as a few thin cakes may contain the whole nutritive substance of a stalled ox, so may this

compendium contain the essential gravy of many a report and adjudged case.

The sages of the law recommend this abridgment to our perusal. Let us with all thankfulness of heart receive their counsel. Much are we beholden to physicians, who only prescribe the bark of the quinquina, when they might oblige their patients to swallow the whole tree.

From these volumes I turn my eyes on a deep-embodied phalanx, numerous and formidable: they are controversial divines: so has the world agreed to term them. How arbitrary is language! and how does the custom of mankind join words, that reason has put asunder! Thus we often hear of hell-fire cold, of devilish handsome, and the like; and thus controversial and divine have been associated.

These controversial divines have changed the rule of life into a standard of disputation. They have employed the temple of the Most High as a fencing-school, where gymnastic exercises are daily exhibited, and where victory serves only to excite new contests. Slighting the bulwarks wherewith He who bestowed religion on mankind had secured it, they have encompassed it with various minute outworks, which an army of warriors can with difficulty defend.

The next in order to them are the redoubtable antagonists of common sense; the gentlemen who close up the common highway to heaven, and yet open no private road for persons having occasion to travel that way. The writers of this tribe are various, but in principles and manner nothing dissimilar. Let me review them as they stand arranged. These are Epicurean orators, who have endeavoured to confound the ideas of right and wrong, to the unspeakable comfort of highwaymen and stockjobbers. These are inquirers after truth, who never deign to implore the aid of knowledge in their researches. These are

sceptics, who labour earnestly to argue themselves out of their own existence; herein resembling that choice spirit, who endeavoured so artfully to pick his own pocket as not to be detected by himself. Last of all, are the composers of rhapsodies, fragments, and (strange to say it) *thoughts*.

Amidst this army of anti-martyrs, I discern a volume of peculiar appearance: its meagre aspect, and the dirty gaudiness of its habit, make it bear a perfect resemblance of a decayed gentleman. The wretched monument of mortality was brought forth in the reign of Charles the Second; it was the darling and only child of a man of quality. How did its parent exult at its birth! How many flatterers extolled it beyond their own offspring, and urged its credulous father to display its excellencies to the whole world! Induced by their solicitations, the father arrayed his child in scarlet and gold, submitted it to the public eye, and called it, *Poems by a person of honour*. While he lived, his booby offspring was treated with the cold respect due to the rank and fortune of its parent: but when death had locked up his kitchen, and carried off the keys of his cellar, the poor child was abandoned to the parish; it was kicked from stall to stall, like a despised prostitute; and after various calamities was rescued out of the hands of a vender of Scots snuff, and safely placed as a pensioner in the band of free-thinkers.

Thou first, thou greatest vice of the human mind, Ambition! all these authors were originally thy votaries! They promised to themselves a fame more durable than the calf-skin that covered their works; the calf-skin (as the dealer speaks) is in excellent condition, while the books themselves remain the prey of that silent critic the worm.

Complete cooks and conveyancers; bodies of school divinity and Tommy Thumb; little story-

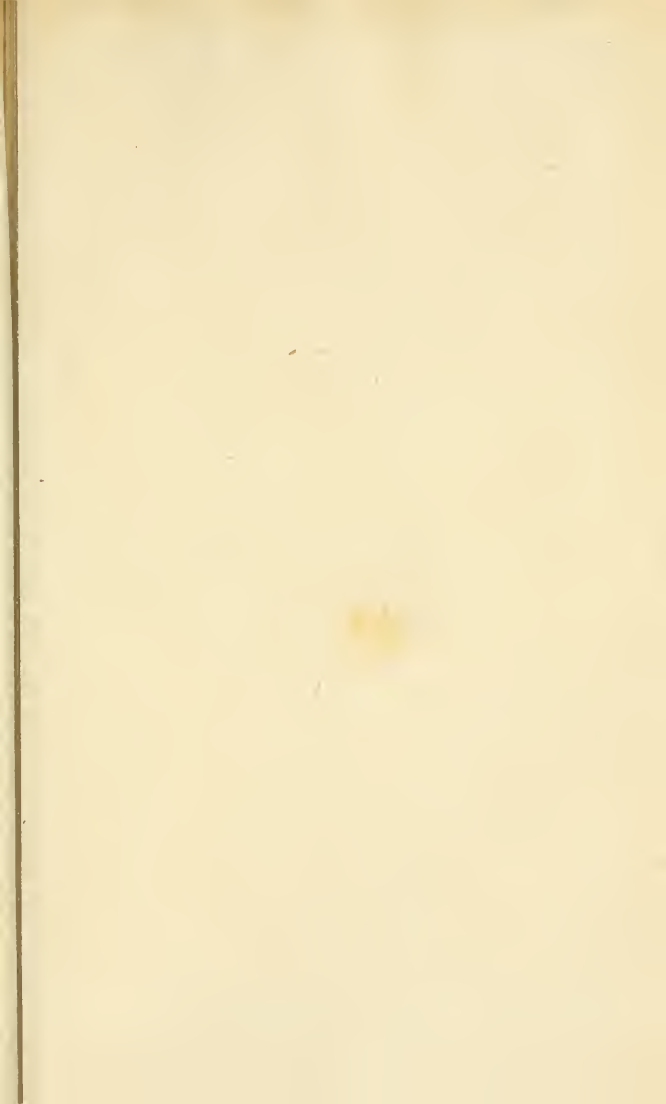
books, systems of philosophy, and memoirs of women of pleasure ; apologies for the lives of players and prime ministers ; are all consigned to one common oblivion.

One book indeed there is, which pretends to little reputation, and by a strange felicity obtains whatever it demands. To be useful for some months only is the whole of its ambition ; and though every day that passes confessedly diminishes its utility, yet it is sought for and purchased by all : such is the deserved and unenvied character of that excellent treatise of practical astronomy, the Almanack.

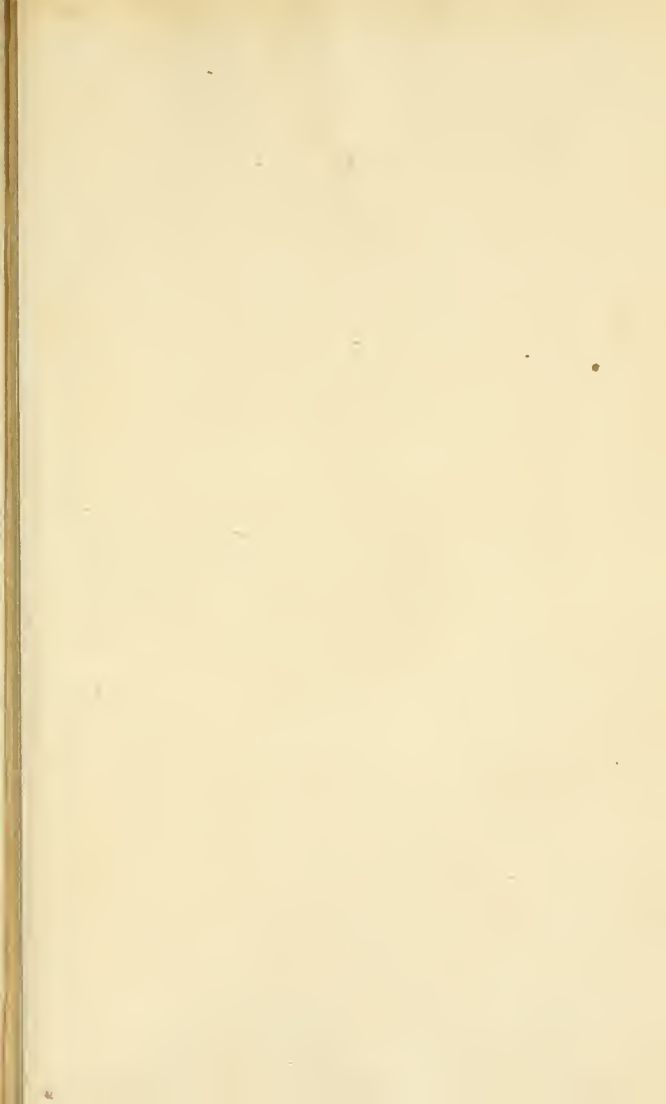
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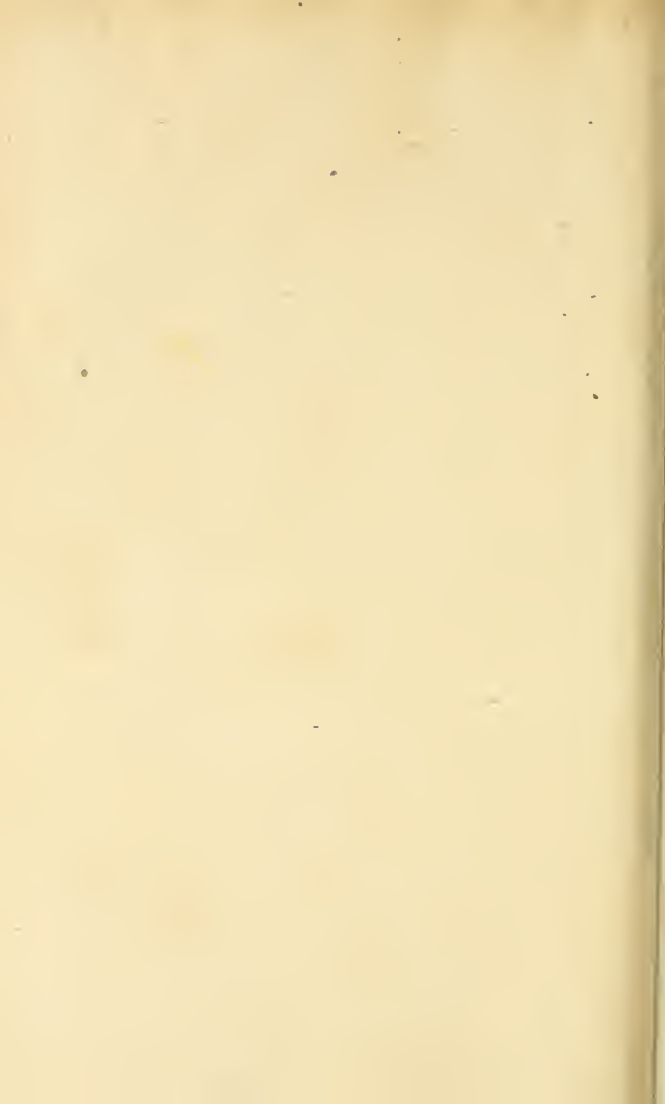
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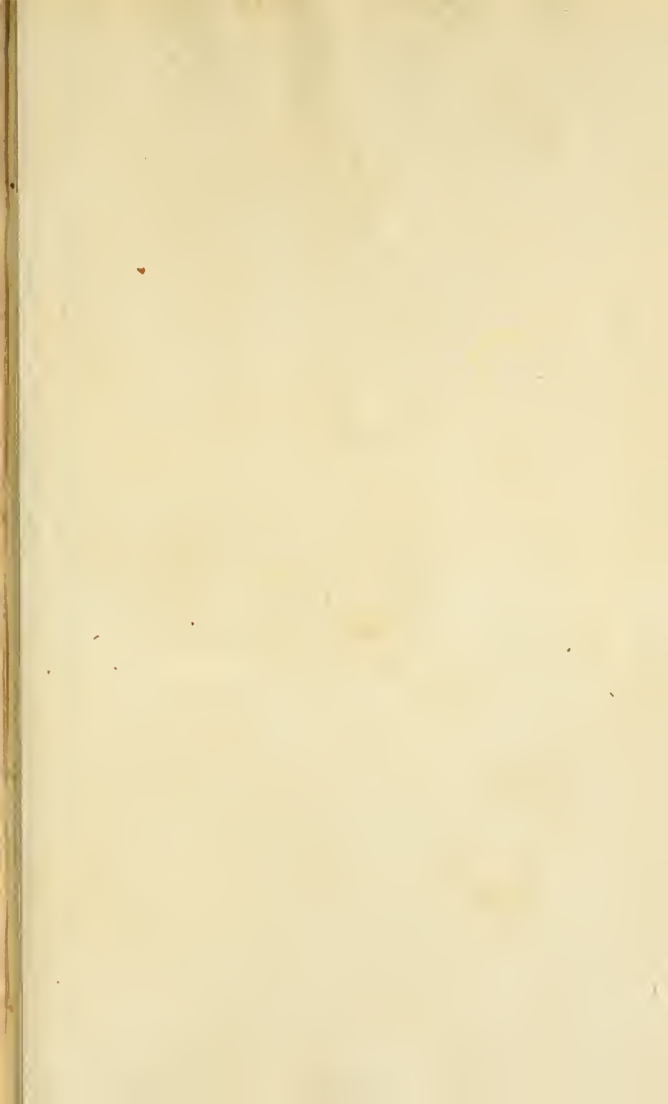
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